



THE
KINDERGARTEN
IN THE HOME
By
Carrie S. Newman



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The Kindergarten in the Home



THE
Kindergarten
in the Home

*"In the sunlit garden,
Through our glad spring day,
Watch the happy little folks
Turning work to play."*

— Froebel.



The
Kindergarten
in the Home

A Book for Parents and for
All Interested in Child-Training

By
Carrie S. Newman

Illustrated by
Etheldred B. Barry

"The Angel Life within each child is more
precious than any other thing in the world."

— Andrea Hofer Proudfoot.



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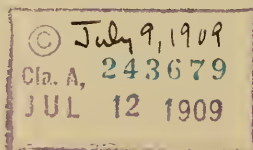
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TO
THE DEAR SISTER, BROTHER, AND LITTLE NIECES
WHOSE HOME LIFE IS A CONSTANT SOURCE
OF INSPIRATION,
I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE BOOK.

“ The distant stars were shining long before their rays reached our earth; the seed germinates in darkness and is growing long before we can see its growth; so in the depths of an infant soul a process goes on which is hidden from our ken, yet upon which hangs more than we can dream of good or ill, happiness, or misery.” — FROEBEL.

Preface



Each year of work in the Kindergarten deepens the conviction that in Froebel's writings are hidden rich gems for the mother in her work of home building and child nurture.

His style, however, is somewhat obscure, and the busy mother with her limited time for reading is not likely, unaided, to penetrate into his deep secrets.

It, therefore, becomes both the duty and the privilege of those who have the leisure and inclination to delve into these mines of truth, to unearth and bring to the notice of

those actively engaged in child nurture these priceless gems.

To present in a simple and attractive form some of the truths underlying Froebel's system of education is the object of this book.

If, by its words, a deeper reverence for child-nature is awakened in some breast; if new light is thrown upon the problems which confront parents in their work; if fresh inspiration and joy is kindled in some heart and some home blessed thereby, its mission will be fulfilled, and the writer abundantly repaid for the hours spent upon it.

Having found a source of light and inspiration one longs to lead other thirsty souls to the same fountain.

The deep importance of the first years of life, and the impressions gained then, grows on one as the years go by, and makes one

long for the privilege of assisting, in some humble way, in the great work of training the coming citizens of the world.

May it be true of this little book that wherever it goes "the grass grows greener still." Because of its message may some little life unfold in greater beauty and perfection.

CARRIE S. NEWMAN.

Toronto, May, 1909.

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The Kindergarten in the Home

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST GIFT

A little stranger had arrived at the Brown homestead and as the dear mother lay resting, with the precious bundle, her first-born son, asleep beside her, her thoughts travelled back over the past months of joyful preparation.

There, in the bureau bought for this special purpose, lay the dainty little garments it had been such a joy to fashion, and side by side with the tiny shirts and

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jackets lay the coloured Kindergarten balls she had made, "food for his heart and mind," as she laughingly told her friends. Thinking of the balls, she lifted her eyes to what she called "the baby's shelf," as on it were kept the books she and the dear father had studied so earnestly during the past months. There was the valuable book on the care of the little body, but more precious still were the books telling how to care for the awakening mind and soul. Oh, what an earnest prayer arose in her heart for blessings on the dear friend who had first led her to see that in her baby she would have not only a little body to care for, but, wonderful thought, an immortal soul, and that to a very great extent the making or marring of that soul lay in her hands!

As week after week she and her husband had read and pondered on this gigantic thought, the tremendous responsibility of parenthood had taken hold of them and touched them deeply, so that many times a day the prayer rose spontaneously in their hearts, "Father, make us fit to have a little child to train."

Tears of joy sprang to her eyes as she recalled the look on Frank's face as he said to her at their last reading, "If every man could gain an insight into this teaching what different lives we should all live. I feel bigger and stronger every time I dip into one of these books."

Presently a smile hovered over her face as she recalled the laughter and fun they had learning to sing nursery rhymes and play ball games that they might be ready in every way for their little visitor. Then,

too, what a depth of meaning they had often found in these little songs that at first sight seemed so simple!

“As soon as I am strong enough I must gather some of my mother-friends together and interest them in this study,” was the next thought of this awakened mother. Frank coming in just then she told him this thought. He heartily agreed, only adding, “Why leave out the fathers?”

During the first few weeks of our baby's earthly life he nursed and slept, slept and nursed as all good babies should. One day during this time our mother ran in to visit one of her neighbours and found her ten-weeks' old baby lying in the cradle sucking a rubber nipple.

“You must get one of these comforts for your baby,” said her friend. “They are comforts indeed: as soon as he gets

restless we just put it in his mouth and it keeps him quiet for a long time.”

“No,” said our mother thoughtfully, “I don’t think I shall. It doesn’t seem to me that is a right principle to work on. He isn’t physically hungry, why then put something into his mouth? It seems to me the same thing as trying to satisfy an older child who is restless because he is unoccupied, by giving him a cake or some candy. Is it not training him to seek satisfaction in the physical nature rather than in the intellectual and spiritual?”

“But how could you give a wee baby intellectual and spiritual food?” was the astonished answer.

“Come to our home this evening and I will show you the coloured balls and tell you about the songs and games we have prepared for just this purpose,” was her

reply as she took her departure happy in the thought of sharing with another the great light that had come into her own life.

As Baby Robert, as he had been named, neared his third month he spent more time wide awake. The parents wisely refrained from taking him up as soon as he awakened, and let him lie as long as he was content. When he became restless, however, they hung the soft red ball where he could watch it comfortably, sometimes lowering it so that as he tossed his hands about he would touch it and set it gently in motion. Often they were rewarded by chuckles and coos of delight.

Then the mother began regularly playing with her baby, using the ball as his first plaything, realizing that as he had a three-fold nature and that play was the

means provided for educating the heart and mind as well as the body in early life, this was as essential to his development as the daily food and bath and should be as carefully planned for.

With the little fellow sitting on her lap, she would swing the ball gently to and fro by its string, singing "Here, there," or "To and fro," or, suiting the action to the words, "Up, Down," "Around and around," or "Jump, ball, jump," baby's eyes following the movement. At first these games were played very gently and just for a few minutes at a time, both the length of time and the vigour being gradually increased to keep pace with baby's development.

One of the books studied both before and after baby's arrival was "Pedagogics of the Kindergarten," by Friedrich Froe-

bel, the founder of the Kindergarten.
This, together with Kindergarten song



books by various authors, supplied them
with suggestions for these early games as
well as later ones.

This playtime soon became a great joy not only to baby but to his father and mother as well.

After several weeks' play with the red ball, the blue ball was put in its place, this followed by the yellow, then the three played with together, and they soon became familiar and dearly loved playmates, care being taken to use the colour name very often, talking and singing of "Red Ball," "Blue Ball," or whichever was being used at the time. The orange, green and violet were not given him till a later period.

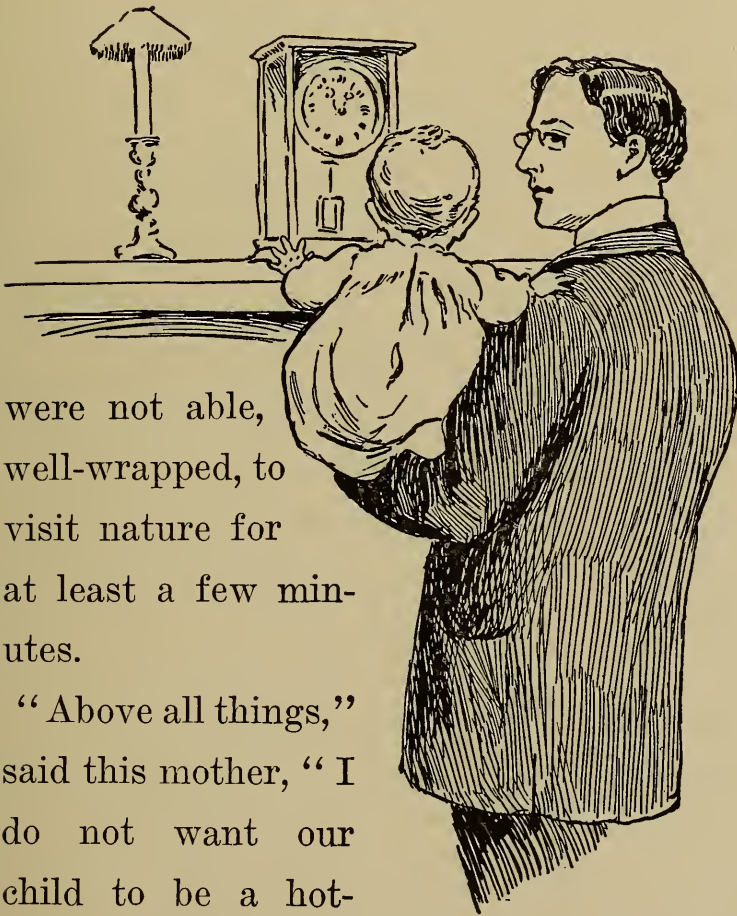
At first father or mother played the game, while baby watched, but very soon he could join in. He learned to grasp the ball by having it put into his tiny palm and the fingers closed gently around it, and it was not long before he would laugh

gaily when one of them took hold of the string and pulled it out of his hand. His hold became stronger each time this game was played, showing that the muscles were being developed by the exercise. Care was taken that both hands were used in these games that both sides of the body should be equally developed.

One day about this time as Father was carrying Robert across the room he noticed his eyes fastened on the pendulum of the clock as it swung to and fro. He paused and holding him up before it swung the little arm in imitation. It soon became a regular thing thus to stop and imitate the swing of the pendulum and the tick-tock of the clock, then to play that the balls were pendulums.

Robert and his mother spent much time every day out of doors, for this she con-

sidered very important for them both, and there were few days so stormy that they



were not able, well-wrapped, to visit nature for at least a few minutes.

“Above all things,” said this mother, “I do not want our child to be a hot-house plant.”

So every care was taken both before

and after birth to give this little soul a strong, healthy body to work with: good wholesome food, cleanliness, plenty of fresh air, wise physical exercise and high, noble thoughts were to them the necessary conditions for a healthy body, and these they earnestly strove to supply.

In these outdoor rambles our mother found that the objects which first attracted her baby were animals. She was surprised to find at what an early age the cat, dog, chickens and flying birds appealed to him, and she began at once to develop this love for his "dumb brothers" by herself expressing sympathy by means of caresses and kind words, often, too, laying the tiny hand on the back of doggy or pussy and so helping baby to pet them. Crumbs and seeds were frequently taken with them to draw the birds and chickens they met on

their way close about baby's carriage. These little experiences were repeated with the balls, indoors, and great was the parents' delight when in answer to the words, "Fly little bird," sung by one of them, baby would swing his ball.

When Robert was strong enough to sit on a quilt or rug on the floor he would often amuse himself with his bright balls for a long time, and many a jolly game he and father had rolling and tossing the balls or playing they were doggies running, pussies jumping or birds flying, and great was the joy of both parents when baby joined his little cooing, humming sound to the song. Years after it was the proud boast of Robert, "My father and I have been chums since long before I could walk."

He used to declare that he could remem-

ber these plays of his first year, but that was probably because one of his dearest life-long treasures was a book containing the history of his first seven years. There on the first page was the photograph of his parents on their wedding day, while page two showed them at the time of his birth with the house and the room in which he was born. Then came photographs of himself in many different positions, first in long clothes, then in short, asleep in his first bed, in his carriage, in mother's arms, in father's, sitting alone and so on. Here he saw himself taking his first steps, in his first boys' suit; saw how he looked when he first went to school. Here he had a record of the first word he spoke, the date when he first walked alone, and accounts of his first games, his first pets, his first friends, his own quaint say-

ings, all written in the one dear handwriting.

“It must have been a lot of bother to make this book,” he once said to his mother. “Why did you do it?”

“Well, dear,” was the answer, “I had often wished that I knew more of my own early life. I questioned with one of our Kindergarten writers, ‘Should we not better understand what we are if we knew how we came to be?’ and so I felt it might be a help to you children to have these early records.”

When Robert began to creep about, which he did very early as he had from the first been given plenty of opportunity to kick and toss about his little limbs, his father made a fence which could in a moment be set up in nursery or sitting room or in fine weather on the lawn, and as

quickly taken down, and in this fold with his dear woolly lamb, his rag-doll and his bright balls, he was as happy as a king while mother sat near by with her sewing or moved about attending to household duties.

When the parents found that baby was pleased with a sharp noise such as he could make by pounding with a spoon they knew he was ready for Froebel's second gift, the wooden sphere, cube and cylinder. So one day when father was rolling one of the soft balls back and forth to baby, who was being helped by mother to perform his part of the game, he exchanged it for the wooden sphere and both were interested to see the puzzled look on baby's face as he heard the sound on the bare floor. It was added to his playthings and many of the old games played with it and

some new ones added, the addition of ability to make sounds giving great pleasure.

One of the games of which he never tired was to watch the sphere roll round and round on a plate as it was inclined first this way and then that, while father or mother sang,

“ Around, Around;
How happy now am I.
Around Around,
I turn now full of glee.
Be happy thou like me,”

or some other rhyme improvised for the purpose.

Robert had been playing with the balls for some little time when his mother noticed that he put out his hand as she carried him past the round top of the balustrade post, and seemed much pleased when

she stopped and let him touch it, showing that he was beginning to notice the forms about him and pick out the familiar ones. Sometime before this he had put out his little hands towards bright-coloured objects like his balls.

When the wooden cube was put amongst his playthings he soon discovered that it would not move like his ball, which ran away from him at the slightest touch.

With the cubes and cylinder he began his first building and amused himself for longer and longer periods piling one upon another and then pushing them down.

A lady who made the Browns a visit at this time was greatly interested in little Robert and his first educational steps and had many questions to ask about it. "It seems to me," she said one day, "a most sensible idea to choose from out the great

chaos of forms and colours with which the civilized child finds himself surrounded when he awakens in this new world, those which are typical and present them one at a time so that he may get a few clear, distinct impressions in place of many vague, indistinct ones. It certainly must be a wonderful help to the young mind and build up the brain in a way which would be impossible otherwise. Then, too, to connect the sensation received through the senses as he looks at and handles his gifts with the proper terms and this by means of song, the voice of love, is a most happy thought."

Robert was six months old when Mrs. Brown decided to take into their home for a few months the three children of her widowed sister while she was absent in a distant part of the country. "I am the

more pleased to do this because I have always felt that Mary did not understand her children and was making some serious mistakes in their training, and this will give me an opportunity to study them and so be better able to advise her," said she to her husband.

"And the effort to understand and help them will be the very best preparation for understanding our own children," was his answer.

The three little visitors were Jamie, who had just passed his sixth birthday, Lulu, four years of age, and May, aged two and a half.

The nurse who had been with them since Jamie's babyhood came to help take care of them. She was a kind-hearted Scotch woman who loved the children dearly but thought it unwise to show her love. She

had been brought up on a system of repression and strove to apply the same methods with her young charges. "Children must be obedient," were the words most often on her lips, and Mrs. Gray was often congratulated on having such an excellent nurse who took almost entire charge of the children, leaving her much time to devote to church and society duties.

Up to her light Nursie was a most excellent woman and as a mother's assistant would have been most valuable, relieving her of much of the physical care and strain that she might be free to nourish the higher nature of her children, but what hireling however competent can take a mother's place? Alas, how many of God's little ones are bountifully, often luxuriously, cared for in all external ways, while their inner selves are stunted, dwarfed,

starved for lack of intelligent care and understanding!

Nursie's chief concern was to keep her little charges fresh and clean and to protect their bodies from all danger and disease; it was her proud boast that no scratch or bruise was ever to be found upon them.

That children grow by means of activity of body and mind; that experimenting, testing, trying their wings was an absolute necessity for full development, and that in developing we must often make mistakes, and do a certain amount of stumbling and falling, was a theory of which she had never dreamed. She, good woman, felt guilty if for a moment one of them strayed out of her sight or met with the slightest accident. "Always ask me before you do anything; then you won't

get into trouble," was her kindly meant but unwise advice.

However, of late even she had begun to feel that something was wrong, whether with the children or herself she hardly knew. Master Jamie was sullen and discontented, Lulu often so stubborn she could do nothing with her, while Baby May seemed the very personification of mischief the moment her eye was off her.

So when Mrs. Brown with much trepidation suggested that as soon as the children felt at home she should take charge of them during the morning and leave her free to assist with the housework and sewing, much to her surprise Nursie made no objection, though she said, "I'm afraid, Ma'am, you'll find them a handful. They are very hard to manage, though they've been so carefully brought up."

During the first days while Nursie was in full charge both Mr. and Mrs. Brown kept their eyes and ears wide open in their anxiety to understand the children and the particular needs of each. With their knowledge of and sympathy with child-nature they were not long in putting their finger on the source of the sullenness and discontent almost habitually pictured on Jamie's face, and of the stubborn fits Nursie complained of in Lulu.

They saw that Nursie's training consisted very largely of an almost continuous series of "Don'ts." When the children were taken out of doors they were naturally seized with a desire to examine everything within sight, to run and jump and caper as all young things should, but Nursie's idea was to take them for a walk, little May holding her hand and Lulu and

Jamie walking before her, according to her ideas, "Like a little lady and gentleman." Any attempt to run on ahead, to jump off the sidewalk, to examine the hundreds of curious things in the grass or the little ponds, was quickly repressed. "They'd make themselves hot, or soil their clothes, or fall and hurt themselves." And so we have the sight, sad indeed to one who understands child-nature, its needs and grand possibilities, but which may be seen in any city on any pleasant summer day, of little children starched and befrilled, compelled to walk up and down the board walks as sedately as if they were eighty years of age, blind and deaf to the wonders with which the great world is everywhere teeming, God's lesson books spread out before the childish eyes, Nature crying out "Look, touch, handle, learn,"

but ignorance commanding "Leave it alone, you'll soil your clothes."

Mrs. Brown, with Robert in his carriage accompanied Nurse and the children on one of these walks. A few days afterward she said, "Nurse, suppose I take the children out this morning so you can sort the clothes and see to the mending. But put on some plain clothes and their stout shoes, so that it won't matter if they should soil them." Nurse looked her disapproval of the latter request, for of all things she loved to see them daintily dressed when they went out, but the prospect of a morning free from the children, together with the quiet determination in Mrs. Brown's face and voice, kept her silent.

When the children returned from their walk with rosy cheeks and tongues which could not move quickly enough in their

desire to tell Uncle Frank, whom they had met on their way home, of all they had seen and done, they looked askance at their dusty shoes and dirty hands and said in a whisper, "What will Nursie say?"

But Auntie only laughed, and leading them round to the side door helped them off with their shoes, saying, "Now run up to Nursie and ask her to wash your hands and faces and give you your slippers."

After lunch Lulu as well as May, much to Nursie's surprise, was ready for a nap, and Jamie amused himself for a long time sorting the leaves, stones and flowers which he had brought home. Under Uncle's direction he made holes in the top of a box for a home for a beautiful caterpillar he had found and, joy of joys to the hungry young naturalist—and what child is not

that? — had not only been allowed but encouraged to bring home and keep as a pet.

The next day and for several days afterwards the rain poured down, so instead of a walk Mrs. Brown had to devise indoor work and play. Early in the morning she came upon Jamie sulking behind a door. She waited until Nurse had gone into another room, then followed and inquired about it.

“He has some nonsense about going out to get leaves for a caterpillar or something of that kind. Of course he can’t go out in the rain,” was the reply.

Mrs. Brown made no comment, but after some pleasant chat about the style for Lulu’s new dress — a subject very dear to Nursie’s heart—in which she gave up her own idea and allowed Nurse to have her way, thinking, “It will pay to give in in



these external matters for the sake of winning in the higher," she said, "Don't you think we might put on Jamie's coat and rubbers and let him run out for the leaves? It won't take a minute if I go with him and it will make him happy." Winning a somewhat reluctant agreement, she ran off to comfort Jamie's heart, whispering to her husband as she passed him in the hall, "You can't imagine how diplomatic I'm growing."

Coming upstairs, broom and dust-pan in hand, later in the morning Nursie was surprised and mystified at the happy scene in the nursery. Baby Robert sat in the centre of the group on the floor holding one of his beloved balls, and from time to time imitating the others, who just now were listening breathlessly to Auntie as she told them a wonderful story about

Jamie's caterpillar; how if he fed it every day with some of the green leaves he had found it upon, it would spin a tiny nest in which it would go to sleep, then by and by wake up no longer a creeping caterpillar but a glorious butterfly such as they had often seen flying about. The children then played that the balls were caterpillars crawling on the ground, eating green leaves, then spinning a cocoon and going to sleep to finally wake up beautiful butterflies sipping honey from imaginary flowers made by the left hand while the right hand held the ball, accompanying the game with the little song "Fuzzy little Caterpillar," found in the Finger-Play Book by Emilie Poullson, the pictures of which greatly interested them.

Presently Lulu jumped up, and running to a bouquet of real flowers on the table

let her butterfly (ball) sip the honey there, and the other children quickly followed.

“ I didn't know there was honey in flowers,” said Jamie.

To which Auntie answered by breaking off a nasturtium bloom and letting him taste the drop of sweet juice hidden in it. She then suggested that each should find about the room all the objects of the same colour as the ball he held, making the agreement that they should not touch anything, but tell her what they found.

While she was busy with Robert a gay party of discoverers was at work in this and adjoining rooms, and there were continual shouts of “ Auntie, this curtain's red; ” “ Auntie, your pincushion has some blue on it,” etc.

As it was now time for Robert's morning nap, Auntie called the children to her,

and, giving to each of them a saucer full of Kindergarten beads (large wooden beads of the six colours of the spectrum, indigo being omitted as too difficult for the children to discriminate) and a shoe-string, she left them to the ever-fascinating stringing of beads.

This box of beads was a great source of joy all through the winter to the two younger children, and for sometime to Jamie also.

At first simply stringing the beads satisfied them, afterwards they enjoyed having a set task given them, such as, thread all the red, all the green, all the yellow; one yellow, one violet; two blue, three red, and repeat till the string is full. Sometimes they played the beads were fruit and picked out the oranges, the red apples or the grapes, either stringing them or ar-

ranging them in rows. Jamie liked to play he was store-keeper and sell the different fruits and vegetables to the others. Then, that they might learn the source of these things, Auntie would suggest that they play they were trees or vines and fasten the coloured balls on for fruit.

The beads are not all spheres, but cubes and cylinders as well, and sometimes the children came to Auntie and Nurse as they sat sewing, selling spools (cylinders) of coloured silk or boxes (cubes) containing all sorts of wonderful things, when Auntie would say, "Yes, I'll take four spools of green silk," or "Give me five boxes of pins, please, three blue and two yellow," and then help the little tradesman to pick out the correct number, giving him thus in his play much exercise in counting and so preparing him for his later school work.

Little May liked to have two boxes to fill and refill with the beads.

Adding the large cubes and cylinder of the Second Gift gave many more possibilities in the way of store-keeping and other games invented by the children, helped out by occasional suggestions from Aunt or Uncle. Imitating the work going on in the home, the cube was sometimes a stove on which bead kettles and saucepans gaily boiled, while water from the cylinder standing beside it and connected by sticks for water pipes was freely drawn to wash the bead dishes, the lively sphere making a most active and busy cook; on a second cube were carefully arranged the jars of jelly and preserves which Lulu displayed with housewifely pride. Mrs. Brown never failed to enter with genuine interest into such play, realizing that by

her sympathy she was watering seeds which were well worth nurturing in view of the fruit they would yield in later life. The child's actual powers are so limited that without this imaginative play the spirit would be sadly cramped and fettered.

The long oblong box in which the Second Gift forms are kept, with the round and squared sticks which come with it, made excellent boats and carts to be loaded with all sorts of merchandise and dragged about the room.

Mrs. Brown was careful, too, to talk much with the children in their play in order to assist them in taking possession of the kingdom of language. Knowing well the "pangs of word hunger," she was anxious to give them every assistance in gaining freedom of speech, power to ex-

press well in language their growing ideals. With this thought in view both she and Mr. Brown were careful in conversation with the children to speak clearly and distinctly as well as to use the proper terms, and as a consequence their children were noted for their clear enunciation and ready flow of language, and so a constant joy to their teachers. Slovenly language was as much discouraged as slovenly manners.

When Uncle came home one evening with several bunches of sticks of various lengths, which he had bought for a few cents at a Kindergarten shop, he showed them how to build famous fences by standing cubes and cylinders with the holes on top and inserting a stick in each, and to represent human beings by standing a cylinder on a cube, a sphere on the cylinder, and running a stick through the three.

The latter were easily moved about and henceforth figured in many a play.

Jamie's heart was delighted about this time by the present of a box of paints and a quantity of cheap water-colour paper, and he was continually finding something



in his walks or play out of doors which he would bring in and try to paint. Painting the pictures in old magazines occupied much of his time and drew forth many questions as to the meaning of the pictures. What he enjoyed most of all, however, was painting imaginary scenes and telling all about them.

“What an excellent preparation for future composition writing. He’ll have plenty of ideas in his head and also know how to express them,” said a teacher who was calling one afternoon. “Why don’t you get a black-board for him? That would develop the larger freer movement so important in writing and drawing, as well as give him greater scope for expression.”

The visible results of this pictorial work were naturally very crude, but out of crude beginnings grow many beautiful things, and his Aunt and Uncle knowing that the real results of all such work were not visible but wrought into the fibre of his life and character, treated all his little productions with respect, and many a slip of paper with scrawlings on it was sent to the absent mother with glowing descriptions of her boy’s unfolding. They also asked a

friend who was something of an artist to give him some help in using his paints and pencils.

“What have you done to that boy? How he has changed,—I should hardly have known him for the same boy,” exclaimed a friend who had not seen him for several months.

“Given him something to live for. Put ‘do’ in place of ‘don’t,’ that’s all,” was the laughing answer.

Besides stringing beads the little ones greatly enjoyed stringing straws and coloured papers. Mrs. Brown gave them first red papers, then blue, then yellow, and so on, for she wished them to gain clear impressions of colour. The interest in this work was heightened by the suggestion that the chains be used to decorate the nursery, and great was their joy as the

chains grew longer and longer. Short threads were given them, and each as it was finished joined to the last, so that, to their eyes at any rate, the room became more and more beautiful. What a pity that a child should ever be allowed to consider himself too small to do anything to help and bless the world; that the desire to help, to be one with others by sharing in the work of the home, which awakens so early in the child-heart, should be crushed by the failure to supply the means for giving it expression!

How ruthlessly we often nip off the tiny buds as they appear in the life of the little human plant and then how we deplore the lack of the full-grown flower in later life!

How the self-respect of these children grew as they felt that they were doing something really useful! Jamie's part was

to fold and cut the papers for the little ones to string, though he sometimes also took a hand in the stringing, Mrs. Brown seeing here an opportunity to awaken and develop a desire to help the smaller and weaker.

Meanwhile the one caterpillar had had many brothers brought in to keep him company till the shoe-box had been outgrown and Uncle had shown Jamie how to make a caterpillar-cage by nailing uprights of wood in the four corners of a soap-box and then stretching mosquito netting over it. The bottom of the cage was covered with a layer of earth kept moist, and the caterpillars bountifully supplied with fresh leaves each day. Many other insects were discovered by bright eyes and placed in the cage that they might be watched.

Mr. Brown felt that this early develop-

ment of a love for, and an interest in all of God's creatures, together with a feeling of responsibility towards them was a most important part of education; that a knowledge of these lower forms of life was a necessary step in learning to know ourselves and the Creator in whose image we are made.

Jamie was very anxious to catch some butterflies, but when it was explained to him that it was almost impossible to touch their delicate bodies, however careful one might be, without injuring them, he was content to watch them without gaining possession, learning there-by one of life's deepest lessons.

The interest in the life of caterpillars and butterflies lasted for a long time, for the caterpillars in the cage were obliging enough to spin a number of cocoons, and it

was a common sight in the Brown household at that time to find Uncle and the three children crawling about the floor as caterpillars, then going to sleep and waking up butterflies, while Auntie with Robert on her knee sang the song, often at the same time playing that his hands were the caterpillar or butterfly. The beautiful story of the caterpillar in Miss Harrison's book, "In Storyland," was told and retold, Aunt and Uncle feeling that this symbolic play would greatly enrich the lives of the children.

"Indeed," said Mr. Brown one evening as he took up the book, "I fail to see how any one can be too old or too wise to gain fresh inspiration from such books."

Watching the children from Robert up, as they played with the type forms of the First and Second Gifts and noting their

interest in finding objects like them, Mrs. Brown was struck with their power to awaken and develop observation, the children seeming to be daily more observant, more alive in every way.

She realized, however, that taking in from without is but one side of education, that there must be continual giving out, "uttering or outering of the inner," if development is to be complete and harmonious. With this thought in mind she began a search for clay with which to model.

A friend told her that she could have it dug from the ground near by, but advised her to send to a Kindergarten store and get some specially prepared for the purpose. She did so and received in reply a package of clay flour with directions for preparing it for use.

A crock of clay was therefore added to her nursery equipment and supplied many happy hours of work and play, even baby Robert taking pleasure in squeezing, patting and rolling a lump.

Many and wonderful were the creations which those young brains evolved from the clay, there seemed literally no end to its possibilities. Every object they had ever seen or thought about took form and body as their hands became more and more skilful, while the growing light in their eyes and the joy in their faces, as well as their own feelings when they, too, took a lump and "talked" with it, helped Mr. and Mrs. Brown to enter more fully into Froebel's words in the Education of Man: "The spirit of God hovered over chaos and moved it, and stones and plants, beasts and man took form and separate being and life.

God created man in his own image; therefore man should create and bring forth like God.

“ His spirit, the spirit of man, should hover over the shapeless and move it that it may take shape and form, a distinct being and life of its own. This is the high meaning, the deep significance, the great purpose of work and industry, of productive and creative activity. We become truly Godlike in diligence and industry, in working and doing, which are accompanied by the clear perception or even by the vaguest feeling that thereby we represent the inner in the outer; that we give body to spirit and form to thought; that we render visible the invisible; that we impart an outward, finite, transient being to life in the spirit.”

Another occupation which the children

greatly enjoyed was pasting squares, circles and triangles of coloured paper to form borders and designs. After they had grasped the under-lying law of design, i. e. that the opposites must be alike, and had learned to follow this law by beginning with a centre and pasting something first at the back, then at the front, then at the right and left, they became very skilful in originating designs, the best of which were used as a border along one side of their playroom.

Jamie became quite expert too in cutting forms from paper. Beginning with the circle, or picture of their balls, he proceeded to fruit, vegetables and different kinds of leaves, learning in this way the names and special characteristics of each, finally attempting birds, animals and even landscapes. These he carefully pasted

into what he called his scrap-book, a school note-book with a bright cover. This book when completed was to be sent to mother as a birthday present.

They also sewed pictures of their balls and toys, in fact of everything which specially interested them, on cards with coloured wool and sent them to mother that she might share in all their pleasures.

This constant outpicturing of their inner unfolding life was a great source of growth, and of understanding both of themselves and of the external world, for as Froebel says, "If man would know himself truly he must represent himself externally, must place himself over against himself as it were."

It was very interesting to their Aunt and Uncle to notice how more and more each child's productions showed his indi-

viduality both in the subjects chosen for representation and in the manner of expression. Though sharing a common life no two were affected in exactly the same way; one passed by almost unnoticed what challenged the interest of another. By this means also they learned to understand the special needs of each and were able more wisely to guide and help the children.

“ Only the quiet secluded sanctuary of the home can give back to us the welfare of mankind. In the foundation of every new family the Heavenly Father eternally working the welfare of the human race, speaks to man through the heaven he has opened in the heart of its founders. With the foundation of every new family there is issued to mankind and to each individual human being the call to represent humanity in pure development to represent man in his ideal purity.” — FROEBEL.

CHAPTER II

PLAY WITH THE LIMBS

Mrs. Brown's great desire for her child was that he might be as free as possible from anything which would limit or dwarf his unfolding life. With this ideal in view she took great care that his clothing should at all times protect his body without binding it or in any way interfering with his movements. Her first consideration in dressing him was his comfort.

Her study of Froebel had led her to see that her baby's stretching and kicking after his morning bath was an unconscious call to her mother-heart "to nurture, wait

upon, strengthen and develop the life stirring within, and to do so in such a way as to lead him as soon as possible to self-



knowledge." She therefore planned to give him every day an opportunity to freely kick unimpeded by long skirts or tight napkin.

Laying him on his back on the bed she would place her hand or breast so that the little feet would kick against it and was surprised to find how much harder he kicked when he found this obstruction in his way than without it.

This daily kicking she knew would strengthen and develop his body, but her great longing was that all sides of his nature, his mind and heart as well as his body, should develop fully and freely, therefore she was never satisfied with any exercise that developed body alone, so to the action she added the explanatory song.

“Up and down, and in and out,
Toss the little limbs about;
Kick the pretty dimpled feet —
That’s the way to grow, my sweet!

This way and that,
With a pat-a-pat-pat,
With one, two, three,
For each little knee.

“By and by in work and play,
They’ll be busy all the day;
Wading in the water clear,
Running swift for mother dear.
So this way and that,
With a pat-a-pat-pat,
And one, two, three,
For each little knee.”

As given in the Blow translation of Froebel’s Mother Play, realizing that long before he could understand the words the love expressed in her voice and the thought in her mind were making an impression on the awakening mind and heart of her child. To vary the game she sometimes took hold of the little legs as he threw them out and gave them a little

push as he drew them back, as suggested by Mrs. Proudfoot in "A Year with the Mother-Play."

Before very long Robert could play the game by himself if a pillow were placed at the foot of the crib for him to kick against, leaving Mother free to tidy the room or attend to other duties as she sang.

A little later the noise made by kicking a newspaper spread over the pillow gave him great pleasure, while one thrown entirely over him as he lay on the bed or floor drew out much vigorous tossing of arms and legs and gurgles of delight when he succeeded in freeing himself from it, and again saw Mother's smiling face and heard the words of encouragement with which she was always so ready when he had put forth effort to overcome.

Meditating on the effort made even in baby-hood to overcome difficulties and the evident joy in achievement, she was led to understand the pleasure of boys in wrestling, climbing, running races and so forth, and to feel how necessary such activity was in the development of a strong, hardy, self-reliant character as well as in bodily growth, and what a mistake we make in forbidding or attempting to restrain such activity.

An effort was being made at that time to fit up the school play-grounds with gymnastic apparatus for both boys and girls, and also to have them open on Saturdays and through the summer vacation with a competent person in charge, and to these schemes Mr. Brown now gladly gave his time and thought, wondering how he had ever been indifferent to these

matters which now seemed of such great importance.

At a meeting called to discuss the using of school funds for this purpose, at which the opposition party was very strong, such inspiration was awakened through the reading by him of part of the chapter on "Play as an Educational Factor" in Mr. Hughes' "Froebel's Educational Laws for all Teachers," that not only was the motion carried, but many parents and teachers were led to read this splendid educational work, to the great benefit not only of their children but of themselves, and the few who had long been working for a truer system of education felt that the new day was indeed dawning.

When the little cousins joined the Brown family they were greatly inter-

ested in this game of Baby's and loved to help him play it.

Mrs. Brown showed them the picture which accompanies the song in the Mother Play book, and was greatly interested in their many questions about it. The first thing they noticed was the Mother playing with her baby just as Auntie played with Robert, and they were intensely interested when it was explained to them that this was a little German baby, for a dear friend had gone some time before to Germany and had sent them from there some beautiful post-cards, and that his mother was playing that baby's feet were stamping oil out of poppies for the lamp which burned for him at night just as the big wheels did in the mills of that country.

They became so interested in the children playing with the toy water-wheel in

the picture that Uncle was called upon to assist in making one like it, and a happy afternoon was spent playing with it in a little stream on a hill near by.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown gained much help from this game in guiding and training their little brood, and the commentaries written thereon. It showed them so plainly the danger of allowing children's activity to expend itself in aimless, impulsive actions instead of guiding it into proper channels, as well as that of attempting to repress it. They saw that a child must be active if he is to develop normally, but that he is not wise enough to guide this tremendous force unaided; that instead of simply saying "stop" or "be quiet" when his activity is leading him in wrong directions we should turn it into new and better channels.

Miss Blow's "Letters to a Mother" fell in their way about this time and opened up to them a whole new world of insight into the meaning of life and broadened and deepened their lives in a wonderful way.

"Oh, that all parents could be led to study and understand these truths!" exclaimed Mrs. Brown more than once.

The chapter in this book dealing with the "Kicking Song," or "Play with the Limbs," and bearing the significant title "Self Making," with its inspiring message, "The characteristic quality of humanity is precisely the ability to overcome defect," and "Our conscious and voluntary lives are merely island peaks rising out of an unconscious ocean of being," stirred them deeply and was read and re-read many times.

Nursie's plan with the children had been to make everything easy for them and to excuse faults on the ground that one was naturally discontented, another nervous or excitable and so on. She knew nothing of the bracing theory that man is in this world on purpose to overcome defect and rise to ever higher and higher ground, and that there is no other source of true joy than that of overcoming, and therefore she tried "to shield the children rather than to arm them," and the poor children suffered in consequence.

For alas, like many children, they were practically motherless, for she who bore them was so taken up with interests outside the home that she was in truth a stranger to her children's real lives, though she would have much resented such an accusation!

She always meant to have more time for the children by and by, and like many persons made the mistake of thinking that the first years were not very important except for physical growth, and that good schools and teachers later on would make up for anything missed in early life.

Thank God, this all too prevalent supposition is fast losing ground, and more and more the world is coming to realize, what the sages of all times have taught, namely the tremendous importance of the first years!

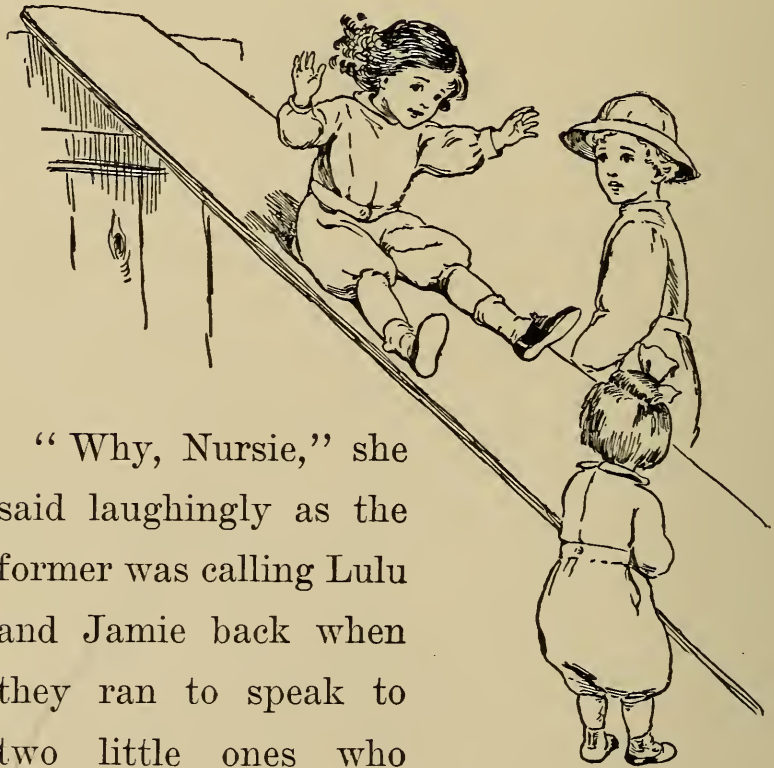
For too long have we imagined that anyone could lay the foundation, provided an artist could be secured to put on the finishing touches, and so ignorant nursemaids have been allowed to answer as best they could the first questioning of the soul as it finds itself in this new and

untried world, and young, inexperienced teachers have been placed in charge of the primary grades in our schools!

While little Robert was given exercise for mind, body and heart by means of games with his limbs and with his balls, accompanied by caressing words, songs and smiles, the older children were helped to gain theirs by much play and work both indoors and out.

The yard with its big swing, its see-saw, its trees and ladders to climb, its sliding-board (a wide board inclined against the wall, up which the children ran and then slid down), its bats and balls, sand-pile and garden-beds, was such an attractive place, so full of life and activity, joyous shouts and laughter, that other children in the neighbourhood soon found their way to the gate and looked longingly in.

Nursie would have sent them away, but Mrs. Brown's heart was too large and her sense of brotherhood too keen, to shut out any child.



“Why, Nursie,” she said laughingly as the former was calling Lulu and Jamie back when they ran to speak to two little ones who were peeping in, “I thought I overheard you telling the children the story of the good Samaritan just this morning, and

impressing upon them the principle of neighbourliness; they are only seizing the first opportunity of carrying out your teaching, — don't stop them," and going to the gate she invited the little ones in.

Later on she explained, "I don't intend to throw our children indiscriminately amongst all the children of the neighbourhood; I have made the agreement that no child shall come in unless you or I invite him, so they will only be here while one of us is present when no harm can be done. Our children need more companionship, and while providing it we may be enabled to help some other little soul, which we must not refuse to do when the opportunity is given us. I never could understand how children could be brought up as Christians and at the same time

debarred from friendly intercourse with the children about them.

“My one regret is that we have no Kindergarten where all the children could meet daily under the wise supervision of a trained kindergartner.

“Jamie especially is craving more free companionship with boys of his own age and we must provide it.”

So instead of four children there were more often to be found a score or so of little ones at play in the yard, or, in bad weather, the big playroom upstairs, and out of this small beginning there grew in the course of the next few years a Kindergarten, Primary School and Training Class which were the pride of the neighbourhood.

It was some little time before Nursie could be quite reconciled to occasional

bruises, scratches and cuts on the little bodies which she had so carefully guarded, but both Mr. and Mrs. Brown felt that to learn to suffer small injuries without complaint was one of life's greatest lessons and a habit which could not be too early inculcated.

It was a proud moment for them when Jamie came sucking a cut finger and bravely keeping back the tears as he exclaimed, "I don't care if I did cut my finger, I made a boat anyhow."

"That's the stuff heroes are made of," said Mr. Brown in an undertone to his wife. It had taken months of encouraging and cheering on, with some laughing at, together with many stories of brave boys and men who were indifferent to suffering when they had some great object to achieve, to bring him to this point, for

when he came to them he was a veritable little coward, crying over the slightest bump or knock and ready to give up any scheme at the faintest suggestion of possible danger.

So when Lulu fell off the see-saw and scratched her knee, instead of fussing over her and telling her not to get on it again, her Aunt and Uncle would say, "Never mind, little girl, you're too big to cry, it will stop smarting just in a minute," and helping her on again would show her how to hold more tightly and watch more carefully.

It took much talking and a good deal of scheming and planning on Mrs. Brown's part to break Nursie of the habit of doing for the children instead of teaching them to do for themselves, thus making them

dependent slaves instead of developing self-reliance and self-reverence. She would rather pick up and put away for them than train them to do such things, but this Mrs. Brown would not allow, for she wished them early to feel a joyful sense of responsibility and power to accomplish.

Low shelves and hooks were arranged in the Nursery and the children expected to hang up their coats and hats and put away their toys. The doing of this was not made a burden but rather a joy by means of games, songs and stories. When beads and blocks were scattered on the floor Auntie would call for squirrels to gather nuts and fill their holes (boxes) and praise the one who was quickest and gathered the most, or changing the words

of the song "Merry Little Men" in the dearly loved Finger Play Book, to suit the circumstance, she would sing,—

"Oh! where are the merry, merry little men
To help me work to-day,
And where are the merry, merry little men
To put these toys away?"

Sometimes when there was reluctance to help on the part of some of the little men, the one who came first or did most would be surprised by an unexpected lump of sugar or other mark of approval.

The children were early trained to look upon their fingers as a little band of workers over which they had control, and as an aid to this were taught the fascinating Finger Songs of the Mother Play Book.

Mrs. Brown early discovered what a great aid music could be in controlling

and guiding the little ones. When clouds gathered as they would at times, and thunder began to roll and lightning to flash, a merry song or two quickly dispelled the storm and brought back the sunshine; the children went off willingly and happily to bed if Auntie or Uncle played a lively march for them to march upstairs to; when they found it difficult to settle down to proper order and quietness for meals Auntie would begin to sing and the children join in the verse:

“ Softly, softly, softly,
We take our places at our meal
Softly, softly, softly,
As quiet children love to do,”

and the quiet tune would quickly bring order out of disorder without tears or feelings of resentment.

Tears sprang to Mrs. Brown's eyes when little May ran to her one day with a very red face and said, "Auntie, sing 'Dod (God) is Love,' tos me tocked (choked)," for she felt the little one was indeed learning all unconsciously where to find comfort and relief, and as she held the little form close to her with a whispered "God loves May," ere she sent her off to her play, she felt abundantly rewarded for the time and thought she had spent on these songs and plays.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown had been much impressed by the following thought given by Mr. Snider in his commentary on the Mother Play. "One of the great difficulties in the training of the child comes from the fact that he receives food, raiment and shelter and perhaps a great deal more without any effort on his part.

“ A necessary donation, but it has a dangerous side; the child gets to thinking that he has a permanent right to such support. He has done nothing, has been taught to do nothing for what he obtains from his parents. Self-reliance is thus undermined by the domestic relation, unless the parent takes the means to counteract it at the start. Nay, the idea of getting something for nothing may become ingrained and lead to gambling, speculation and even crime; it may lead to theft, which is the shortest cut.”

They felt that here they had the key to unlock the problem of much of the selfishness, idleness and dishonesty in the world around us, and pondering deeply how to avoid this quagmire in training their young brood, they decided that no child was too young to have some task to per-

form each day for the good of the family, therefore instead of having a servant dust and keep in order the nursery the little ones worked with Auntie and Nursie to do this each day, and probably there was no part of the day more thoroughly enjoyed, for what small child does not love to dust, shine and rub as she sees grown people doing. Tiny brooms and dust-pans were amongst their most beloved possessions, and joy of joys, on Saturdays they were allowed to try their hands at washing windows and scrubbing shelves as well as to wash, hang out to dry and finally iron dolls' clothes, dusters and towels. Of course this made much more work than to have a servant do it, and occasional accidents in the way of spilled water and wet clothes were to be expected, but all this Mrs. Brown counted as nothing when

compared with the forming of habits of industry and helpfulness. She was also continually on the watch for other small



jobs which the children with a little help could perform. An occasional morning was spent in putting the yard in order, gathering up scraps of paper and dead leaves, sweeping the lawn and so on.

Sometimes on a cold, rainy fall afternoon Uncle would come home tired and wet to find a bright fire, his chair drawn up to it, his slippers toasting, Baby Robert performing his part by sitting solemnly on the rug tightly hugging the evening paper, and the joy that comes from unselfish effort for the comfort of others beaming in each face as the children exclaimed, "We did it. We did it. We tidied the room for you, too."

Jamie never forgot one unhappy evening when he had selfishly refused to leave his building and help in these joyful preparations, how while the others were sharing kisses, caresses and happy jokes he stood a little apart unable through his own act to make one of the happy circle, apparently for the moment forgotten by every one; not one word was said about his

selfishness, but he never needed another lesson along that line.

Often Auntie would leave the group in the playroom or on the lawn and return with a big dish of peas to be shelled or radishes or celery to be carefully washed, and when some hours later they sat down to dinner it was with the happy feeling that each had done something to prepare the meal.

Nursie was directed to have all the basting threads left in new garments for the children to pull out, and Jamie was a proud boy, when, after many attempts he succeeded in sewing on buttons so they would stay.

Mrs. Brown was surprised when she set herself to look for them how many things there were that even the smallest child could do to help, and her heart rejoiced

as she found in what simple ways the lesson of "each for all and all for each" could be inculcated and a child helped from the beginning of life to realize that he is a member of a great whole, with a place to fill and a work to do for that whole, and she realized as never before how the failure to provide such daily experiences in childhood must result in selfishness and narrowness in later life.

"Each age has duties from whose performance it may not be released. Childhood forms no exception to this general law. Happy the child who is led, even though unconsciously, to act in accordance with its claims. Duties are not burdens but privileges. The path of duty leads to light and to all the blessings conferred by light. Therefore each normal

and healthy child gladly fulfils duties," says Froebel.

"The home is not a home nor the family a family unless each does his share," says another writer.

It is a false kindness to try to save from effort. "Our truest friend is not he who makes things easy for us, but he who makes us do our best."

That their children might daily grow stronger in body, in mind, and in character was the conscious aim which Mr. and Mrs. Brown kept ever before them, and to achieve this they were willing, nay glad, to give their lives, and in so doing they found, as every true teacher and parent does find, that "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

*The Mother calls "Cuckoo!" to baby now,
But there shall come ere long another call,
Hidden, yet near,
And oh so soft and low,
The child must listen well if he would hear!*

*At first it seems a call from other where,
But, heeded well, it enters the child's soul,
A dweller meet;
And ever henceforth there
Mingles its mandates with his heart's life-beat.*

— FROEBEL.

CHAPTER III

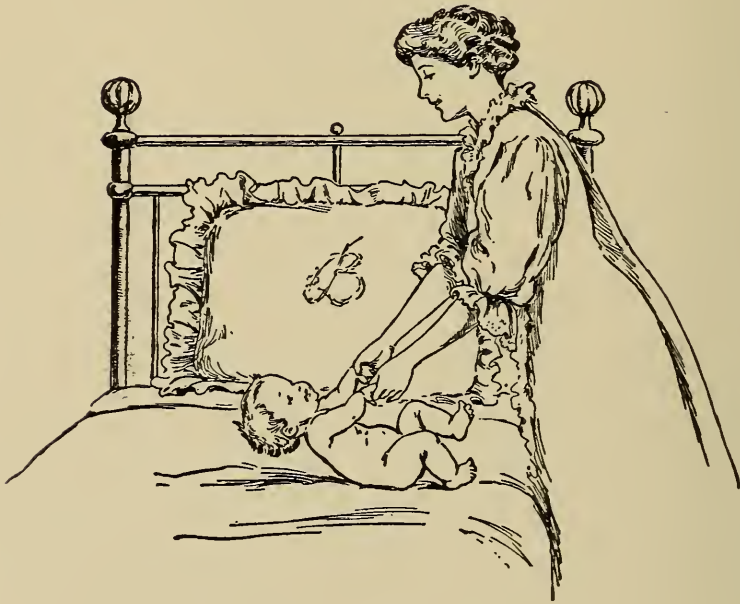
THE FALLING GAME

While little Robert was enjoying the Kicking Game described in the last chapter, he was also enjoying the Falling Game of the Mother Play Book.

As he lay on his back on the bed, or on a pillow placed on the table, his mother would put her hands beneath him and raise him to a half-sitting position, then withdrawing them would let him fall back on the bed or pillow, singing as she did so the song by Emilie Poulsson in the Blow edition:

“ Down goes baby,
Mother’s pet;

Up comes baby,
Laughing yet.
Baby well may laugh at harm,
While beneath is mother's arm.



“Down goes baby,
Without fear,
Up comes baby
Gaily here,
All is joy for baby while
In the light of mother's smile.”

Or, she would raise him by taking hold of his hands, then quietly letting them slip from her own he would fall back upon the bed with a slight shock.

The first time or two this game was played, when baby felt himself slipping away from his mother his face showed a slight sense of fear, but mother's face was shining upon him and her loving voice reassuring him that all was well, so he soon smiled back and by and by greatly enjoyed this play, while the tone of Mrs. Brown's voice grew richer and deeper as she realized more and more that by means of such play her baby was learning to truly trust her, to feel that all was indeed well, "While beneath is mother's arm," for was he not finding through actual experience that he could safely trust both her wisdom and her

love? while at the same time the consciousness of his own inherent strength and power was awakening within him, as he dimly sensed the truth of his own individuality.

That they might so live day by day that he need never unlearn this lesson, never face the sad experience of finding that father and mother could not be fully, implicitly trusted, was the deepest longing of these parents.

More earnestly than ever before in their lives they longed to be sincere, for they felt that another soul was leaning on them, another soul looking to them to guide aright his first steps in this new, untried world, and from the depth of their hearts rose the prayer that they might themselves be all that they desired their son to be, for well they knew that

“ living the life ” was the only influence which would really tell in their dealings with their children.

“ If you'd bind your little one to you,
Bind your own self to all that's high and true
And let its light shine clear through all you do.”

So Mrs. Brown and Robert day after day played this Falling Game until, as he grew stronger and more confident, she was able to raise him higher and higher, and letting him fall back receive an answering smile of recognition that knit their hearts closer and closer together, though she kept always in mind Froebel's admonition, “ One must not wilfully go on with this or that play in opposition to the wish of the child, but always follow the child's circumstances, requirements, and needs, and his own expressions of

life and activity," also that of Mr. Snider in his commentary, "This play, like every kind of play, can be carried to excess in various directions.

"The tossing can be so rough that the child is frightened, thus he is cowed and his growth towards independence is delayed rather than promoted. The limit is carefully marked in the song: the child must show his recovery by the smile, the smile of recognition, after the act of casting him off."

Pondering the thought that in such a game as this the child's faith is awakened, the parents were much interested in studying the definitions of faith given by various writers as well as in tracing the steps to be taken in developing it. Drummond thus defines it, "Faith is but an attitude, an empty hand for grasping an environing

presence," while Miss Blow speaks of it as "the active instinct of sonship and brotherhood," "an impulsive leap of the individual toward the universal spirit," "the electric line over which spiritual life is both communicated and discharged."

They were much impressed by the thought of Pestalozzi given in the words, "I must love men, trust them, thank them, obey them before I can rise to loving, thanking, trusting, obeying God. 'For he who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he love his Father in Heaven whom he hath not seen?' " and more deeply than ever they felt what a responsibility it is to be "A grown-up in a world of growing-ups."

Feeling with Miss Blow that "The nurture of childhood must be rooted and grounded in faith," and that "It is the

first and all important duty of the educator to win faith by deserving it," they wrote in large letters and placed upon the wall where their eyes would continually fall upon it the resolve, "We will say no word to our boy which we do not sincerely mean."

A homely phrase, but one which they felt contained much wisdom in dealing with a child.

In meditating on how to hold and keep their child's faith in themselves they felt that the one thing they must guard most carefully was that unruly member, the tongue.

Through contact with many different parents and children they were led to see that the root of disobedience lay very often in the habit of thoughtless, unmeaning words on the part of the former.

How often a parent refuses a child's request or gives a command without ever giving the subject a moment's earnest consideration!

How often the child early finds that the parents' yea is not yea, nor his nay, nay!

Is it an unusual sight to see a child forbidden to do a certain thing and, after some teasing, often alas! some kicking and screaming, allowed to do it?

Have you never looked on while a mother told her small child a half-dozen times to stop doing something while the child calmly went on to all appearance as deaf as a stone to his mother's voice?

If we really studied this question of obedience, if we took it as we ought to take every problem, into the closet, and laying the matter before Him to whom

all hearts are open, all desires known, then in the silence reverently and expectantly awaited the answer which assuredly would not be denied us, should we not find that the root of disobedience lies far more in ourselves than in our children!

Should we not have to face the truth that many of our commands and prohibitions spring not from earnest conviction on the subject, but simply from custom or from the impulse of the moment, and so the child early learns that our "no" can be easily changed into "yes" or safely ignored altogether!

Does not the boy who said, "Mother said I could not go, but I'll just keep still a day or two and then probably she will have forgotten what she said," or the little girl who remarked with a toss of

her curls, "Mother said she'd have some cherries for us when we got home, but I don't suppose she will, she's always saying she'll do things and then not doing them," give us an insight into the character of too many parents?

We don't mean to be untrue or to deceive our children, we have only fallen into the habit of saying something and forgetting the next moment what we did say, but alas! by such thoughtlessness many a little child's faith is undermined in the very beginning of life and the seeds of disobedience planted by our own hands.

Is it not a truism that the man or woman who really deserves the faith and confidence of his fellow-men, has it? And is it not equally true that the parent or teacher who in his daily life proves to the children that he is a strong rock, an an-

chor in which they can in time of necessity safely trust, will be respected and obeyed? A child naturally feels that he is in a world whose laws he does not fully understand and is glad to follow the guidance of one in whom he has implicit confidence.

A teacher once wrote to the correspondence editor of an educational paper asking for advice as to how to deal with pupils who persistently disobeyed him. The answer he received was, "If you are a new teacher you must have patience until you win the confidence of your pupils. If, however, you have been for some time in this school and are still disobeyed you had better choose some other position in life. You are a misfit in the schoolroom."

In the "Education of Man" Froebel

gives us the following pregnant sentences: "Between educator and pupil, between request and obedience, there should invisibly rule a third something, to which educator and pupil are equally subject. This third something is the right, the best, necessarily conditioned and expressed without arbitrariness in the circumstances. The calm recognition, the clear knowledge, and the serene cheerful obedience to the rule of this third something is the particular feature which should be constantly and clearly manifest in the bearing and conduct of the educator and teacher, and often firmly and sternly emphasized by him.

"The child, the pupil, has a very keen feeling, a very clear apprehension, and rarely fails to distinguish whether what the educator or the father says or re-

quests is personal or arbitrary or whether it is expressed by him as a general law and necessity. This obedience, this trustful yielding to an unchangeable third principle to which pupil and teacher are equally subject, should appear even in the smallest details of every demand of the educator and teacher."

So while Mrs. Brown was striving to awaken and nourish little Robert's faith in herself by such games and plays as this Falling Game, both she and her husband were earnestly striving to train themselves never to give a command or refuse a request, whether in word or action, for very many of the little child's desires are made known by the latter means, without first weighing the matter. Having done this, they were sure of the ground upon which they stood and so

could speak with a quiet decision which in itself commanded obedience, and the children learning from the beginning that their word having gone forth neither tears or teasing could avail anything, these were almost unknown in the Brown family.

Of course they frequently failed to live up to this ideal, but they accepted Goldsmith's saying, "The true glory of life consists not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." Mrs. Brown found herself sometimes saying, "Don't" first and then stopping to consider whether there was any real reason why the child should not do as he wished, instead of thinking before speaking, but knowing her weakness she persisted until she overcame it. She fully tested the advice she gave to mothers in after years,

“When the word ‘Don’t’ or ‘Stop’ is on your lips hold it back until you have put to yourself and answered the question, ‘Is there any real, sensible reason why the child should not do as he is doing?’ and you will be surprised to find how seldom you can give an affirmative answer.”

The children therefore had much freedom to follow their natural desires and inclinations, and when they were refused a request or given a command they accepted with the feeling that there was some good reason behind it, they instinctively felt and obeyed this invisible “Third something” to which he who gave the command was equally subject with them.

They realized “vaguely at first but clearer by and by” that their parents’

commands were founded, not on personal whim or prejudice, not, as a child often expresses it, "Because father or mother is cross, or tired, or busy," but because it was the right, the best thing to do under the circumstances, what they themselves would do if in the child's place.

Their parents were simply voicing for them a universal law, and so they obeyed without the feeling of being coerced by a stronger personality.

Do we not all instinctively follow the advice of one whom we feel knows more in any given line than we do?

When the relation between parent and child is one of mutual trust and confidence, obedience follows as a natural result. Disobedience arises from a lack of perfect confidence — the confidence which every little child instinctively has in grown

persons, especially in his parents, but which alas! is often so early destroyed because he finds us unworthy of trust.

Another educational principle which they found invaluable in their life with the little ones was that of changing the centre of interest when the child's activity was leading him in wrong or unwise directions.

Instead of scolding Jamie when he drew pictures on the wall, or the margin of books, they supplied him with an abundance of paper and pencils, and a blackboard, and then insisted that he should draw nowhere else.

Lulu's desire to investigate other people's drawers and boxes was overcome by giving her a drawer and boxes of her own, with treasures to keep in



them, and allowing no one to touch them without her permission, helping her thus to respect "the rights of property." Little May's fingers were kept so busy that she had no time to get into mischief.

Thus through being sympathetically, intelligently nurtured by those whose lives were founded, not on the sands of impulse and personal feeling, but on the strong rock of universal principle, the children daily grew in faith and love towards their fellow-men, thus taking firmly and securely the first step on the ladder set up from earth to heaven.

Like all parents and teachers, Mr. and Mrs. Brown were continually tried and tested by the young people around them, but so earnest and sincere were they, so anxious to live up to their responsibilities,

that though weighed in the balance they were not found wanting.

They, too, learned the lesson of the Falling Game, and though they often slipped and stumbled, their mistakes only made them take a firmer hold of themselves and realize the more fully that just as

“Baby well may laugh at harm
While beneath his mother’s arm,”

so they too could be happy and joyous as they remembered that “The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

As the consciousness of mother’s love stirred the heart and brought forth the answering smile on little Robert’s face, so the ever-growing consciousness of the loving presence of “Him in whom we live

and move and have our being" brought strength and joy to his parents.

In explaining the Falling Game, Froebel tells us that the child must slip back with sufficient force to feel a slight shock. The mother, who is acting the part of Providence, is instructed, as it were, to push her child from her and to push him with such force that he shall feel the separation; but while separating him physically and helping him to a consciousness of the separation she binds him to her spiritually by her love expressed in song and smile as well as in the care she takes that he shall suffer no real harm.

But why thus separate her child from her? The mother who loves her child "not wisely but too well," who feels that her mission is to save him from every tear or trial, who, to use her own words,

“Loves her children so dearly that she cannot bear to see them shed a tear,” will not like this game or its teaching.

But the mother who realizes that for her child as for herself,

“Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is the destined end or way,
But to act that each to-morrow,
Find us further than to-day,”

will see in this little game an opportunity to help her child towards a consciousness of himself as an individual separate from other individuals and from things, a consciousness which he must gain before he can enter upon his birthright and fulfil his destiny as a free, responsible being.

“The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast
Has never thought that, ‘this is I.’

“ But as he grows he gathers much
And learns the use of ‘ I ’ and ‘ Me,’
And finds ‘ I am not what I see
And other than the things I touch.’

“ So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As through the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined,”

as Tennyson so beautifully puts it in
“ In Memoriam.”

Froebel’s belief was that the groping soul may be much helped “ in rounding to a separate mind,” by games.

The little game of hiding baby’s face behind a handkerchief, or on Mother’s breast, then hailing its re-appearance with delight, which is played in almost every nursery, but which, because no deep meaning is recognized in it, is played only

occasionally and with little intelligence on the part of the grown-up participator, was a regular feature of nursery life in



the Browns' home, the parents realizing that the moment of separation with the joyful re-union was helping baby to "find himself."

“ Why does my little one laugh so, and crow
With pretty exultant pride
When I find him at last, after feigning long
To look for him far and wide ?

“ Ah, well may a note of exulting be heard
In the laugh of the sweet little elf !
He triumphs not only because he is found,
But because he is *finding himself*.

“ He feels that his being is something apart
From the people and things that surround ;
He knows what is meant when his name is called
out
When he hides, that tis *he* must be found.

“ Play on, gentle mother, play on with thy child,
But his deeper life never forget ;
He has reached a new stage, with new need of thy
care,
To guard where new dangers beset.

“ With reverent love greet each wakening power,
And turn its glad eyes to the light ;
He hides now in sport, but he never will hide
His opening soul from thy sight.”

Is the beautiful motto to one of the Hiding Games of the Mother Play Book.

The older children also spent many happy hours both out-doors and within playing hide and seek, Aunt and Uncle's hearty interest adding much to their joy. Little May dearly loved the Cuckoo game, in which she or one of the other children hid themselves from view and then revealed their hiding place by softly calling "Cuckoo." Often while Auntie sat sewing she would hide behind a door or curtain and Auntie would call "Cuckoo" and receive the same call in reply. Being hidden from view and yet able to communicate by voice seemed to give her intense pleasure, and she would keep as still as a mouse listening for the dear voice. Robert, too, soon enjoyed having his face hidden for a minute while he

listened. Thus were these little ones being prepared to listen for and obey the still, small voice within.

In all these games Mr. and Mrs. Brown were careful to avoid the danger pointed out by Froebel of the children learning to love concealment by making the chief joy of the game that of the happy reunion.

Kisses, hugs, smiles, happiness always greeted the child when after his few moments of separation he came again into view.

For as Miss Blow tells us in her book, "Symbolic Education," "In every attempt to apply practically the insight into estrangement and return, the important thing to remember is that alienation is always means to an end. The child who hides too long in play may do something

which will create a desire to hide in earnest.

“ The boy whose adventures at school, in the field, on the playground, are not poured into his mother’s ears and interpreted by her sympathy will be led away from her instead of being drawn nearer to her by these alien experiences. The student may lose himself so completely in the past that he can never find himself in the present, the traveller may wander too long in foreign lands and thus kill his love of country. . . . Separation *for* union, estrangement *for* return, is the watchword of education, and the impetus through which individual life widens from a mere point to infinitude.”

So these parents held ever before them the two-fold purpose of helping each child to “ find himself; ” to know himself

a separate individual having his own life to lead, his own place to fill in the world, and at the same time drawing each one nearer and yet nearer to them and so to all humanity by the invisible bond of love.

Their rule with the children was never to do for them what they could with a little help and showing do for themselves, that the feeling of their own power, their own ability to accomplish might grow with their growth.

When little Robert dropped his playthings or sent them out of reach, they were not constantly picked up and given back to him, but he was carried to them and encouraged and helped to pick them up himself, while the older children were trained at any early age to dress and undress themselves and to feel pride in

being able to do so. In every way possible they were trained to do for themselves, to be self-reliant.

Little May was so happy when at last,



after many trials, she could button her own shoes, that for several days the button-hook was seldom out of her hands and her shoes were taken off and put on at intervals all through the day.

Nursie had the bad habit when she first came of blaming the articles about her for any little accident that occurred. When, for instance, Lulu running pell-mell through the hall bumped her head against the door, she would comfort her by saying, "Naughty door to hurt my pet, we will just whip it," and was greatly surprised when Mrs. Brown pointed out to her what a stumbling block she was placing in the child's way by teaching her to lay the blame on something external instead of seeking the cause in her own lack of care and self-control.

Her plan was, after kissing the bumped place and wiping away the tears, to show the child that the cause lay in her own hurry and thoughtlessness, and that the innocent door was rather to be pitied for being treated so roughly.

“Take care, little engineer, or your engine will run away with you,” was a warning often on her lips when the children showed signs of excitement or boisterousness, for she wished them early to learn the invaluable lesson that they could and must be master of their feelings; self control meaning to her control by the higher self.

Alas, as we look about us how many cases do we see where the engineer has given up his place as master, and allows his feelings, his passions, or his nerves to master him!

Many men and women seem never to have grasped to the slightest degree the thought of their power over circumstances, but weakly allow their boat to be tossed hither and thither by every passing breeze.

In order to develop in their children

the habit of cool, serene, quiet self-control so necessary in all true living, Mr. and Mrs. Brown strove in every way to avoid the rush and hurry with its consequent excitement, irritation and nervousness, so prevalent to-day.

So important did they consider a calm, quiet, restful atmosphere in the home, that they were willing to sacrifice many interests in order to gain it, for they felt the truth of Froebel's words, "Without collectedness the soul can neither strengthen or unfold her powers," and realized that rush and hurry were fatal to this spirit.

Although not teachers in the ordinary sense of the word, they took to themselves and applied in their daily lives the words of a writer to teachers: "But above all things the teacher must think, she must

be alone, she must deny herself many things for the work's sake — not waste her energies on idle stories, not be industrious in reading and idle in thought, nor expect to grow wise by merely appropriating the thoughts of others — she must seek for wisdom as for hidden treasure.”

“ If the chosen soul could never be alone,
In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God alone,
No greatness ever had been dreamed or done.
The nurse of full-grown souls is solitude.”

They planned as carefully for a daily hour of quiet communion as for the daily meals.

“ 'Tis not in seeking,
'Tis not in endless striving,
Thy quest is found.
Be still and listen ;

Be still and drink the quiet
Of all around.
Not for thy crying
Not for thy loud beseeching
Will peace draw near;
Rest with palm folded,
Rest with thine eyelids fallen,
Lo! Peace is here,"

truly sings Edward Rowland.

In their study of ideal home life as pictured in Froebel's Mother Play Book one of the deepest impressions made upon the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Brown was that a true home could not be contained within the borders of four brick or wooden walls, but presupposed an environment of nature, and that an important part of this environment was animal life. So to the cat and dog who had been members of their household from the

first, they gradually added hens and chickens, rabbits and pigeons, and feeding and caring for these played an important part in the daily life of the children. "How can I nurture nurturers unless I provide some weaker life for them to nurture?" said Mrs. Brown. "How else can I help them to gain a conception of what Mr. Hughes calls the greatest of all truths, namely, that they have power to help other life to grow to grander life?"

This thought of education as a process of "nurturing nurturers" also helped her to a deeper realization of the important part which dolls play in the child's education.

Does not the real charm of the doll lie in the fact that to the imagination of the child it needs her help, it is cold or hun-



gry or sad and she can comfort and help it, and should we not carefully supply the young soul with all it needs to draw out and develop this God-like desire?

The children of course in their play imitated the life of their dumb companions. They were greatly interested in the Mother Play Game of the Pigeon House and dramatized it in a great variety of ways. Often chairs formed the Pigeon House and the children flew in and out, then were shut up safely for the night, but before going to sleep told with their soft "Coo-coo" all they had seen and done during the absence from home.

Mrs. Brown often called the children her pigeons, and as they started off for a walk with Nursie or Uncle, or to spend an hour or two with some of their little

friends, she would say, "Now, little pigeons, be sure you remember all you see and do to tell me on your return," and never would she allow herself to be too busy to hear all their little experiences, for she felt that the habit of telling mother everything was the very greatest safeguard a child could have and that no pains should be spared to establish and keep it up.

The motto of the Pigeon House Game pleased her very much.

"Glad out-going, sweet home-coming,
In this little game they see;
At the real home-comings, Mother,
Gather them about your knee;

"Ask them of each sight and happening,
In the quiet twilight hour,
Help them weave it all together
Like a garland flower to flower.

“With the years, the larger knowledge
Of life’s wholeness then will come,
And its twilight hour will find them
With themselves and God at home.”

Jamie was sometimes allowed to go with the other boys to sail boats in a stream near by, to fly kites, or gather nuts, for they felt that they must not clip the wings of their pigeons, but rather help them to gain the full, free use of them. Always after one of these excursions the little traveller found the home party eager to hear all about it.

Sometimes he returned with new impressions which, if he had had no one to freely and unreservedly open his mind to without fear of ridicule or reproof, might have been the beginning of undesirable lines of thought; but bringing his every experience and problem to the

sympathetic ear of Aunt and Uncle, he was set right upon many points that without such careful guidance might have started him off in wrong directions.

They did not often say much at the time, for they wished him above all things to feel no reserve in opening his unfolding heart and mind to them, but seeing a wrong tendency in its very beginning they were able, often quite unconsciously to the child, to direct his steps into the right path.

When the boys called for him to go with them Mrs. Brown would frequently invite them to stop at her house on their return and show her their treasures, for she wished to keep in close touch with his friends. On such occasions the boys were pretty sure to find apples, gingerbread or lemonade awaiting them and

to have such a merry time recounting their experiences, that they soon voted Jamie's Auntie "Awfully jolly," and having established such a reputation she was able on occasion to drop a hint about rude talk or behaviour and have it received and acted upon.

"To arm rather than to shield" was her constant watchword. It would not be long before Jamie must go every day to school where he would necessarily meet with new temptations or problems, and for this they wished to prepare him.

For Robert, too, she felt that

"Soon her arms must loose their hold,
Not, as now, in pretty play —
Keeping still their circle round him
That no jar or fright may wound him —
But for all the day.

“ And for this her thoughtful love
Must his little life prepare:
Teaching first how she is needed,
That through her fond cautions heeded
He may learn self-care.”

“ He who would know the Creator must exercise his own creative power.” — FROEBEL.

“ Play is the highest phase of child development, of human development at this period, for it is self-active representation of the inner, from inner necessity and impulse.” — FROEBEL.

“ The child must reproduce with matter what he has received into himself from the external world in order to understand it.” — FROEBEL.

“ Knowledge is food but creation is life and we live not to eat, but eat to live.” — SUSAN BLOW.



CHAPTER IV

THE CONSTRUCTIVE FACULTY

“ The debasing illusion that man works, produces, creates only in order to preserve his body, in order to secure food, clothing and shelter, may have to be endured, but should not be diffused and propagated. Primarily and in truth man works only that his spiritual, divine essence may assume outward form, and that thus he may be enabled to recognize his own spiritual divine nature and the innermost being of God. Whatever food, clothing and shelter he obtains thereby comes to him as an insignificant surplus.

“ Therefore Jesus says, ‘ Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven,’ i. e. the realization

of the divine spirit in your life, and whatever else your finite life may require will be added unto you.”

Mrs. Brown never forgot the first time she read these words in Froebel's "Education of Man." It was one stormy winter evening some months before Robert's birth when, Mr. Brown having gone to attend a church meeting, she was all alone.

So impressed was she with these words that she read and re-read them, then laid down the book and followed the train of thought they had awakened. "This has been the consciousness," she mused, "of all the great artists, musicians, writers and reformers of the world, but, oh, how far from this are the ideals and lives of the common people! How few young men for instance start upon their life-work

with any clear realization of this great truth!

“ Does the education we give our sons and daughters send them out into the world full of the thought that there is a place for them to fill, a work for them to do for the good of the race, or does it send them out, the boy with a keen desire to make money, the girl to have a good, easy time? ”

These words of Froebel came back to her many times as she watched the children at play and helped her to enter more fully into the meaning of Christ's words, “ Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven,” for is not the whole of a child's free, spontaneous play the unconscious attempt on his part to put his inner world into outer manifestation, and does not

the desire to do so spring from his deep inner being, the deep unconscious sea surging within?

The human being has come into this world for no other purpose than that he may become conscious of his own real being and therefore of the Creator in whose image he is made.

The divine spark within begins to stir from the very beginning of the infant's life and urges the child to continual activity. But alas, how very few parents at the present day are filled with a feeling of reverence at the sight of the child's activity, and put forth earnest thought and effort to guide it aright! How few truly realize that there is an angel within their child striving for expression! How few study a child as "a struggling expression of an inner divine law!"

The child does not understand these inner feelings, and if those who should understand and be able to guide and help are as blind as he, have we not a case of the blind leading the blind and both falling into the ditch?

In years gone by the mother lived more with her children; she had fewer outside interests and she and they grew and solved many of life's problems together. For some years woman's life has been leading her away from home and children, but thank God, the pendulum is now swinging back, and mothers and those who look forward to motherhood are beginning to realize that there is a science of motherhood which is full of fascination for the motherly heart. Surely this is one of the greatest and most hopeful signs of the times.

Some of the greatest minds of the day are earnestly and scientifically studying the beginnings of intellectual and emotional life that we may know better how to deal with the young human being and avoid the sad dwarfing and stunting so common in infancy and childhood.

Such a scene as the following was often enacted in the Brown household: Lulu sitting on the floor utterly absorbed in the construction of some wonderful piece of architecture, only jumping up now and then to fetch a doll or some animal to complete the scene; presently the work is completed to her satisfaction and she calls upon Auntie and the other children to come and see what she has made. Then with dancing eyes, in which one who has eyes to see can trace a great depth of feeling, she explains that this is a house

where a little girl lives and this is the father just come home, and this the table laid for dinner, and so on. "Striving to



interpret the world by creating its image," thinks Mrs. Brown as she lays down her sewing and listens, asks questions and shows a genuine interest because she realizes something of what such sympathy

and recognition mean to the young artist in these her first attempts to out-picture the story in her mind, and how without it the soul may be crushed and so thrown back upon itself as never through a long life to fully recover.

“The joy of the artist is already his, what seems a crude and even absurd resemblance to us is enough to satisfy him, and woe betide the stale and withered soul that dares to laugh to scorn the creative impulse!

“It is far better that one should strike the child a blow on the head than risk stifling this divinely ordained utterance of the dim but awakening power of the young soul to reproduce or express the images from the world within. The majority of mankind struggle all through life from lack of power to outer or utter

their inner sentiments, dreams or ideals — beating like imprisoned birds against an iron cage, in which reserve, criticism or fear has shut them. Misunderstood souls are they—forever longing for recognition, forever losing the priceless privilege of enriching the world with their ideals, of strengthening it with their inner experiences,” writes Miss Harrison, of the child building with blocks in “The Kindergarten Building Gifts.”

Mrs. Brown felt that there were two things demanded of the Mother and educator, that she supply the young soul with an abundance of suitable material for the expression of his ideas and ideals, and that she ever treat his little productions with reverence and sympathy, and as she resumed her work after one of these numerous interruptions, which she

realized were after all the real work of her life, she meditated on "the deep meaning that oft lies hid in childish play."

She saw how by such play the power of concentration, so indispensable in all real living, is cultivated, and as carefully refrained from unnecessarily breaking into their train of thought as she would had they been artists drawing pictures or writers writing books. She would always give them warning some minutes before it was time to lay aside work for bed or outing, and she instructed the servants to ring a first bell for meals ten minutes before they were expected to sit down, that the wonderful castle, mud pie or picture which was being constructed might be completed, or left in a safe condition for future operations.

How cruelly is a little mother who is getting her dolly ready for bed or walk sometimes compelled to lay it down, cold and uncared for, at the call of an older person, and if she waits to cover it carefully before responding, told she is a naughty, disobedient little girl; good girls come the moment they are called!

Every such clash between the inner and the outer call weakens the child and builds a character which has no stability, no concentration, but changes its line of thought and action to suit every passing breeze. When the teacher later on complains that the boy or girl is lacking in power of attention, in concentration and perseverance, how few parents trace these weaknesses back to their own training in early childhood!

What *is* true obedience? When the

parent, following solely the impulse or whim of the moment, demands of the child that he do that which his inner guide, striving for his truest and fullest development urges him not to do, whom is the child to obey?

Have parents not reason to meditate earnestly on the last words of the command, "Children, obey your parents *in the Lord*," and ask whether their commands or prohibitions are really of the Lord, or of their own small, petty selves, that is, whether they spring from universal principle, or from custom or habit founded on no true principle?

Again Mrs. Brown saw how active the little brain was in play, how the whole circle of mental activity was called vigorously into action as the child conceived an idea, planned how to express it with

the material at hand and then carried it to completion. Perception, conception and execution each playing its proper part, play is the truest form of self-activity. Nature guides the child aright, but how often parents and teachers instead of studying Nature's methods and co-operating with her imagine that they have found a better way and insist upon the child's walking in the narrow, narrow path, they have laid down; and in consequence we find few men or women who are in full possession of all their powers of mind and body, few who are truly happy. Is there a full-grown man or woman who does not realize that he or she might be much more than he is? Is it not a universal experience to realize as we grow older that there are sides of our characters which are almost wholly un-

developed? Do we not all wish as we look back upon our childhood and youth that our education had been a broader, more universal one, and feeling so does it not behoove us to be up and doing that the children of to-day may have less to regret in later life?

Is there a father who does not desire that his son may be a more truly successful man than he is? But wishing alone accomplishes nothing; like the little child we must carry our ideals into execution. Is not the weakest character the one who plans most and accomplishes least? Is not the failure to complete the circle of mental activity the great weakness of our schools to-day, so that we have a multitude of men and women, who like Kingsley's character, Mr. Leigh, "possess almost every gift except the gift of the

power to use them?" Are not our boys and girls spending hours upon hours memorizing facts, letting other people's thoughts run through their heads, with almost no opportunity of giving expression to the ideals which should be aroused by this study?

Most of our expressional work in school is limited to language which is but one and the most difficult of many forms of expression, with all of which the child should be familiar, that he may have many modes of expression, gain the all-round development which comes through using them, and at the same time discover in which he can best live out his own particular life and bless the world.

When manual training becomes, as it is to become, a necessary step in every subject of instruction, the terrible cramming

so common in school work to-day and so detrimental to the best intellectual development will be relegated to the dark ages, for the child must thoroughly assimilate the knowledge which he is to use in original expression. True manual training is not by any means the reproduction of set copies, but the expression in material form of the original conception of the producer.

So long as the schools strive to develop the receptive and reflective powers and leave the development of the executive powers, or "the powers which apply or use the knowledge gathered by the receptive powers and classified or made ready for use by the reflective powers," largely to chance circumstances, the full circle is not complete and the pupils consequently one-sided and unsatisfied. How full our

schools are of boys and girls longing for the time to come when they shall be released, studying not from a love of study, but painfully, from a sense of duty alone, the natural result of a system of education which ignores the keen desire to be doing, accomplishing, achieving, and treats the human being as if his one desire was knowledge for the sake of knowledge, while the truth remains that he is hungry for knowledge in order to live, to do.

But after all, the great benefit of all original expressional work is that by means of it the child learns to know himself. His work or play is the mirror in which he sees his own inner life reflected, and by studying this reflection he learns to know himself spiritually just as he learns to know his own face by seeing it reflected, he discovers his strong points, his best line for

work, and at the same time the weak places which he must strengthen.

It was interesting to watch Lulu's development along the line of carefulness and steadiness, for she was naturally inclined to rush at things without careful thought and preparation. Her first buildings were apt to topple over ere well begun. Jamie, on the other hand, was very careful and exact, perhaps inclined to be a little too anxious and careful, so that working together, they were a great help to one another,—Lulu learning that it paid in the end to plan well and work carefully, Jamie, that if he were too deliberate and careful Lulu would soon outstrip him and finish before he had well begun.

No words could ever have brought home to them the many lessons they learned through their own experiences.

To cultivate a habit of carefulness and exactness and also to give them a standard of measurement, Mrs. Brown covered a low table with oil-cloth lined in one-inch squares which she bought at a Kindergarten supply store. Being called upon to admire some piece of architecture she would commend the one built straight on the squares and also set up a new line of thought by setting them to discover whose tower was highest, or train longest; how many blocks were in the back of the chair, or how thick the wall was, thus giving them an insight into the use of numbers, a valuable preparation for future work in arithmetic,—a preparation the lack of which often makes this study such a bugbear to both pupil and teacher, whereas it, like all study, should be a continual joy. Should not the satisfaction of mental hun-

ger be at least as great a pleasure as the satisfaction of physical hunger, and if it is not should we not carefully examine the food supplied as to whether it is the proper food for the stage at which the pupil has arrived and whether we are giving it in proper quantities?

This free expressional work gave Mrs. Brown many a peep into the inner workings of these young minds, and, as all mind is one, helped her to understand herself and all others, thus adding to her own happiness and also her power for good in the world, for is it not true that "all true joy is that of the spirit breaking its previous bounds?"

It also helped her at times to ward off a danger which threatened these little lives, as when for instance, on Jamie's return from a visit to a little friend whose un-

thinking friends had given him for a birthday present a box of soldiers with cannon



and other war implements, he spent a long time drawing and exulting over a bloody war scene; bringing it to share with her, she praised the execution, pointing out the

good points and drawing his attention to some errors, then having warmed the little heart by her sympathy she said, "But somehow war pictures make me feel very sad," and pointing to some lines which he had told her represented a soldier (one of the enemy) who had just been killed, she said, "Poor fellow, how sorry his wife and little children will be; no kind father to come home each evening and love and care for them. I would rather look at and make pictures of people who are loving and caring for one another." Jamie said nothing, but she afterwards saw the paper crumpled and torn in the waste-paper basket, and later on he showed her a picture of firemen saving the lives and home of a poor family, and as she commended it he said quietly, "I like it best, too."

“Why will Christian parents persist in awakening the savage delight in bloodshed in their young children by giving them such playthings,” said Mr. Brown when he heard of this incident. “Surely such things ought to be kept out of our nurseries as the first step towards eliminating them from the world.

“So long as parents encourage children to play war shall we have the reality. Of what use to teach love and brotherhood by words, while our actions, which speak much louder than our words, inculcate their opposites. The boy who spends hours playing with a toy pistol is apt to be ready as a man to use it on the slightest provocation, the imaginary enemies of childhood becoming the real enemies of later life. Should not the imaginary world in which the child so largely lives be filled with

friends, not enemies, with love, peace and goodwill instead of strife and enmity? ”

“ Oh, how earnestly we should all pray, help us to live more nearly as we pray! The great need of the world to-day is that our religion, instead of being so largely a matter of praying and singing hymns on one day of the week, should be the ruling motive of our every-day life,” replied Mrs. Brown.

Then, too, Mrs. Brown saw clearly that the way to prevent a habit of destruction was to help the child to construct. Shortly after her sister’s children came to her, Lulu one day got hold of a pair of scissors and cut holes in the nursery table-cloth. Nursie tied up the little hands, telling her she was a very naughty girl as she had been told never to touch scissors, though in her heart she blamed herself more than

the child, for she felt that, knowing she had got into similar mischief several times, she should have been more careful to keep the scissors out of her reach.

Mrs. Brown, however, looked at the matter through a different pair of spectacles.

Her study of childhood showed her that such a manifestation did not spring from a wrong motive, a desire to do wrong, as Nursie supposed, but from the natural desire for change-making, the first step in construction. She realized that without the desire in the human race to change the form of things there would be no progress from generation to generation, but that we should be living to-day just as our forefathers did. The child's desire was not wrong, it was simply working itself out in a wrong way because the right had not been provided and therefore the activity

should not be suppressed but led into the proper channels. To treat it as wrongdoing and try to prevent it was to sin against the whole race, for, encouraged and rightly directed, it would do its part later on to bless and raise humanity; crushed and restrained, it would not only injure the life of the individual but rob humanity of some of its power, even if it did not break out in later life in illegitimate ways, thus helping to poison the stream of life.

“Parents and teachers are making history; they are making or unmaking civilization; they are promoting or holding back the triumph of God’s kingdom upon the earth.” We need to connect our daily actions with the great whole of life in order to view our work aright. We are a part of the great world energy, and working,

not only for our own family, but for the race.

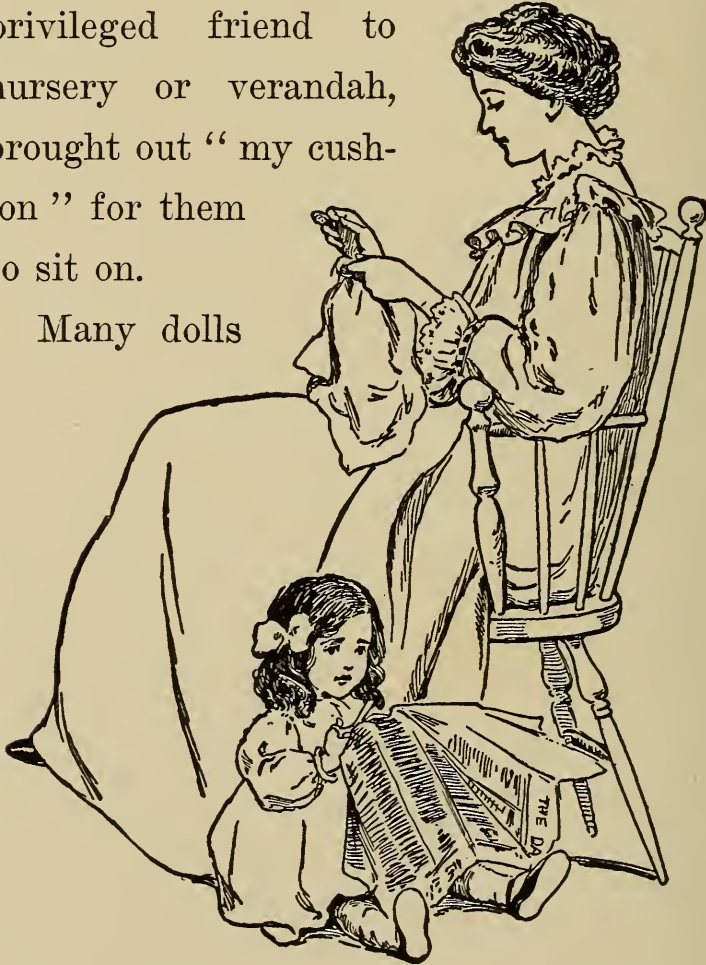
She said nothing, but a few days afterwards returned from a shopping expedition with three pairs of small, blunt-pointed scissors, and proceeded to help the children make many things with them.

Lulu's face was a picture to delight an artist when, a few days later, she found herself sitting on the floor at Auntie's feet with the long-coveted pair of scissors in her hands and a whole newspaper to cut up just as she pleased.

Simply cutting it into fragments satisfied her at first, but Mrs. Brown knew she must not let activity expend itself aimlessly, so she suggested that the pieces be cut very small and used to stuff a cushion, and stitching some turkey red cotton into a cover she gave it to her to fill. Many

happy half-hours were spent in this work, and it was a very proud little girl who, on the visit of some privileged friend to nursery or verandah, brought out "my cushion" for them to sit on.

Many dolls



took their naps upon this cushion and it eventually became the bed of the pet kitten. Thus was a little soul fed, encouraged and trained to be a useful member of society as well as helped to realize the joy that comes alone to those who use their activity to bless the world.

Cutting fringe to decorate dolls' clothes, the table cloth and the shelves of the toy case kept her busy for some time, coloured paper taking the place of newspaper as the fingers became more expert in handling the scissors.

From this she passed to cutting pictures from old papers and magazines, being led thus to examine them carefully and gain much information from them, till she was able by and by to cut very creditable leaves, flowers and fruit freehand, thus unconsciously training eye and hand for

future work. The best of these forms were saved and pasted in a scrap book, thus encouraging careful work and a desire to do one's best each time.

For a week before little May's birthday, Lulu with Auntie's help spent the time when the former was having her daily nap in cutting beautiful doilies and other decorations for the table on that eventful occasion, the possession of such a happy secret filling her little heart with joy and drawing her nearer to her little sister.

Another enjoyment was to fold squares of coloured paper into what the children called " Butterflies," which when cut gave a variety of forms to be pasted in a symmetrical figure.

Having supplied them with an abundance of paper, and scissors which it was safe for them to use, it was easy to teach

them that they must not cut other things. Only once did Lulu forget, and the tiny lock was no sooner severed from May's head than she was filled with regrets for her thoughtlessness and quite willing to agree to the suggestion that the scissors must go into a box and remain there until she could teach her fingers not to cut the wrong thing. A whole day without the beloved scissors was enough to teach her the lesson and at the same time give her an insight into the importance of, "A place and a time for everything."

“ Froebel taught that the true Christmas Tree for the child is the tree on which hang gifts made by the child for others. Too often children are made selfish at the time when of all the days in the year they should be trained to understand the joy of giving.”

— JAMES L. HUGHES.

*“ The child will miss the joy of living,
Unless he learns the joy of giving.”*

CHAPTER V

CHRISTMAS IN THE HOME

As the month of November neared its close Mrs. Brown began to make preparations for the Christmas festival.

Christmas had always been such a joy to her that she longed to have every child with whom she came in contact enter into its blessedness.

Many a time she had listened with amazement to such exclamations as, "Oh! I am so tired of Christmas!" or, "I am always glad when Christmas is over once more," for into such feelings she found it impossible to enter, although her Christmases were now counted by the tens, and

she would answer "Oh! I hope I shall never be too old to thoroughly enjoy Christmas."

Pondering this question she came to the conclusion that Christmas might be spent in such a way as to make it a weariness as the years went by instead of the constantly growing joy it was surely intended to be. Listening to various groups of children as from time to time they discussed the subject, she found that in the majority of cases their pleasure was connected almost entirely with the thought of getting, that the idea of Christmas as a special time for shedding abroad joy and happiness, of helping to make "Peace on earth, good-will to men," a practical reality for at least a few days during the year was an ideal of which they seemed almost unconscious.

As she looked back upon her own childhood and realized how her father and mother had helped her to enter into the real meaning of Christmas while she was still a child, a deep feeling of gratitude rose up in her heart and made her long to do the same for other children.

She remembered how weeks before Christmas she and her brothers and sisters began planning presents for each member of the family, how bits of work were carried to school to be worked on at recess, that mother's eye should not discover the wonderful secret.

Her heart still beat fast at the remembrance of work carefully hidden away in drawers and boxes to be taken out and worked at stealthily lest the eye of the one whom it was intended to surprise should see it before the eventful day; of heads

close together in the corner as they discussed putting their pennies together to buy some coveted object for father, mother or grandparent, and of the quick dispersion with nods and hints of secrecy, as the person whose present they were discussing came in sight. How important they felt and how hard they tried to look as if they had only been discussing the weather!

What shouts of joy there were when grandmamma carried off mother for the whole day and how fast their fingers flew as they made the most of the opportunity to work on her present! Very crude were those little presents, but, oh! how much love was worked into them as they watched them grow from day to day and pictured to themselves over and over again the happy moment when they could present them! How they ransacked the fash-

ion and home magazines for new ideas which they could carry out, and how patiently the older ones helped the younger!

“Come to my house to tea and bring your mother’s present to work on,” was a frequent invitation of one school-girl to another, and any one who learned a new stitch in knitting or wool work or came across a new design for lamp-mat, bookmark, or any of the few articles they were capable of producing, at once became teacher to a class of willing pupils. “May I go to Mary’s house, she is going to show me how to make so and so,” was a familiar request in a mother’s ears.

She laughed heartily as she recalled how for several years, when she was about six or seven years old, she had knit father a gay pair of garters a yard or so in length and of every possible and impossible hue,

for it was such fun to knit a little piece of one colour after another. Not for many years did she discover that gentlemen did not wear such garters, for they were always received with great pleasure and much admiration, with a smile at mother as he said, "I was thinking it was time I had a new pair of garters. How good of little daughter to remember father and put in all those stitches for him!" Little did he think that thirty years after a gray-haired woman would look back and with tears in her eyes thank him for the little deception.

He thought only that his little girl had patiently worked stitch by stitch at something which in her innocence she felt was a need she could supply, and he accepted the love which prompted it. It was always so hard she remembered to find anything

to make for father, and he always praised the made gift, however crude, so much more than the boughten one.

The candy store lost its patronage at this time of the year for every penny was needed for presents.

How eagerly the children watched for the first arrival of Christmas goods at the village shops and how quickly the announcement of their arrival would be followed by a row of noses flattened against the panes of the window!

She could still feel the ripple of excitement which passed over the schoolroom as it was whispered from one to another that Jennie Smith had come past Clarke's store and the clerks were opening big boxes that, of course, must contain Christmas goods!

How would those funny little shops that

had seemed to her then like a little bit out of Paradise look to her now, she wondered! Would anything ever again look so truly beautiful as those Christmas dolls with their cold china heads and painted hair! How one hoped almost against hope that one of them would fall to her share!

Then how fast one's heart beat as her eyes fell on an article which was just the thing for brother or sister, and how timidly she entered the shop and asked the price, thinking that perhaps it cost many dollars, and how delightful to find it could be secured for thirty cents, particularly if one already had twenty cents saved up and Grandma had promised ten more for carrying her the newspaper every day!

How eagerly they watched for small jobs by means of which a few pennies

could be earned, and how kind they thought father when he said they might sweep his office every Saturday and he would pay them for it!

They talked of and worked for Christmas during their waking hours, and dreamed of it all night.

Then came the happy Sunday afternoon when they were asked to remain after school and practise carols for Christmas. It always seemed to bring Christmas so near when they began once more to sing, "Peace on earth, good-will towards men," and "Hark! the herald angels sing!"

At last came the week before Christmas with the farmers bringing in trees and greens, the gathering in the church to make wreaths, stars, etc., and at home the stoning of raisins, washing of currants and chopping of candy-peel, in all of which, as

well as in dusting and decorating the house, the children had a share.

Father began creeping in with parcels peeping out of his coat pockets, when he and mother would disappear behind closed doors.

How they longed to know what was in those parcels and how they hugged themselves and one another as they whispered, "That parcel looked just like a doll. Oh, I hope it was!"

The most fascinating feeling of mystery was on every side. Big brother was hidden in the woodshed from whence issued the sound of hammer and saw — "Was it dolls' furniture, or a new sled?"

When they were hustled off to bed a full half-hour earlier than usual, a proceeding they would have warmly resented at other times, they made not a word of protest,

having a faint suspicion that it meant new dolls' clothes or other delightful things. And when at last the morning so eagerly looked forward to during the long, long year, really dawned and daylight found them joyously unpacking the stockings so carefully filled by Santa with the very things each most coveted, and they were at liberty to present to the other members of the family the gifts they had prepared, and to unburden their hearts of the many secrets they had so long held, — surely Heaven could provide no truer joy than was theirs.

Mrs. Brown had entirely forgotten the present and was living in the happy past, from which she was aroused by Mr. Brown's coming in from the meeting he had been attending. She laughed as she admitted she had been day-dreaming and

exclaimed, " Oh, Frank, we must help the children to enter into the real meaning of Christmas, it is too blessed an experience to lose out of one's life! "

Some little time before this, to the great joy of the children, Mrs. Gray had written that she hoped to be with them for Christmas.

Mrs. Brown's heart too had rejoiced at the different tone of her sister's letters as the months went by. She had written her very fully week by week of all the children were doing and of what she and Mr. Brown were trying to do for them, and the spark of true motherhood which had so long slumbered in Mrs. Gray's heart had at last struck fire and was being fanned into a strong, steady flame.

A few days later Mrs. Brown called the children around her and talked with them

about Christmas, asking them if they would not each like to make a present for mother.

To this they willingly agreed, although the younger ones had little idea what it meant.

They only knew that anything Auntie proposed was likely to be a true pleasure.

She had planned something which each one with a little help could do. Little May could string a long chain of straws and papers for mother to hang in her room, Lulu sew a flower on tinted cardboard and make it into a blotter, while Jamie with his coloured crayons could make a calendar representing the four seasons.

She wished each to make something which it would take many days, working a little at a time, to complete, that they

might absorb as much of the Christmas spirit as possible.

This work nicely under way she talked to each separately of what he could make for the others. Lulu with her help could cut out a family of paper dolls for May, Uncle would show Jamie how to whittle some tops and boats for the girls and baby Robert, May could pick out all the prettiest buttons in Auntie's button box and string them for a necklace for Lulu.

Nursie caught the spirit of it and had the children at certain times in her room working at some mystery which was not to be made known until Christmas.

A few days after they began this work, when they ran into their play room, or nursery, after breakfast they found hanging on the wall, low enough for all to see and for the little ones to kiss and love, a

beautiful Madonna and Child, or as the children called it, "The Mother and her



Baby," and over and over again they heard the story of the Christmas Baby, the Star,

and the Shepherds, till they knew it by heart. They drew and sewed pictures of the Shepherd's Crook and the Star, and represented with their blocks the stable and the manger till it all became very real to them and they loved it dearly. They also learned to sing very sweetly several simple Christmas carols that they might be able to tell Mother in this way all about it.

The week before Christmas the little presents were all finished and the last few days were devoted to making chains, stars, flags and other decorations for the tree which Uncle, Jamie and the gardener cut down on the hill near by, and set up in the play-room ready to be lit on Christmas Eve when Mother came.

The house was also decorated with green from top to bottom, the children sticking

in pieces wherever they thought they looked pretty.

One happy morning was spent by the children with Auntie and Nurse in a large toy shop. It was carefully explained to them beforehand that they would see many things they would like to have, but that these were for all the boys and girls in the city, so of course they could only have their share; each might choose one toy for herself and one for the little children of the kind woman who washed for them. Mrs. Brown felt it was not fair to take children to see so many things they would naturally like to possess without preparing them as far as possible to understand the situation.

In planning their own presents for the children Mr. and Mrs. Brown sought to get for each something which would be a real

joy and pleasure to him for a long time. For the little girls they got strong, durable, yet beautiful dolls which they could dress and undress to their heart's content, beds for them to sleep in and carriages in which to take them out.

Jamie had a long wished for box of tools, made for real use, with a quantity of wood soft enough for him to saw and cut, and the new red sled on which he had set his heart.

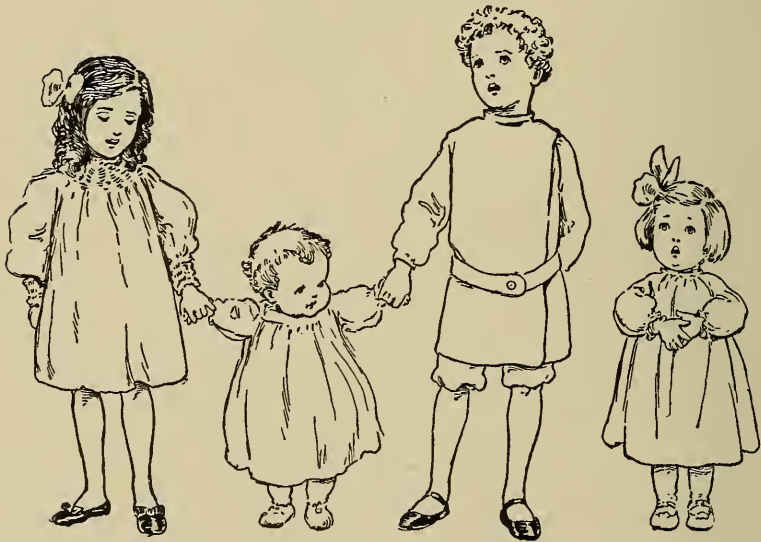
They also bought several beautiful picture books which were to be the common property of all.

Early on the morning of Christmas Eve the dear Mother arrived, and that was joy enough for one day. In the early evening, however, the tree was lit and the presents made by the children distributed, and what more beautiful sight is there in this world

than a Christmas Tree with its twinkling lights, surrounded by a bevy of happy children's faces! Little Robert clapped his tiny hands and crowed with delight, and the older children could only be beguiled to bed by the promise of having it lit again to-morrow evening. Even the anticipated visit of Santa Claus was for the time forgotten in the beauty of the tree and the joy of presenting to Mother, Aunt, Uncle, Nursie and Cook the gifts their little hands had so lovingly prepared.

When a few hours later Mother and Auntie stole about amongst the sleeping children, filling each little stocking with the treasures so dear to childish hearts, they paused for a moment beside each bed, together praying that the Christ-Child might indeed take possession of each little heart and reign there.

After breakfast Christmas morning the children gathered about the piano and sang their little carols, then sitting around the glowing Christmas fire amid the festive



Christmas greens all took part in telling the Christmas Story:

Later in the day Nursie went with them to carry the presents they had bought for the little children of their good washer-



woman, and also a basket of Christmas goodies to an old lady and gentleman who lived near by.

A couple of days after Christmas their little friends and playmates were invited to spend the afternoon with them, and what a truly happy time they had playing games, listening to music and stories, eating a simple dainty lunch around a table beautifully decorated with flowers and lighted candles, pulling bonbons, dancing around the lighted tree on which was a simple present for each, then just before going home sitting quietly singing carols and listening to the Christmas Story told simply enough to interest the youngest listener, while so beautifully as to fascinate the oldest.

“It is the most beautiful children’s party I have ever seen,” said one enthusi-

astic mother, and many others were ready to echo her words.

“My children are usually sick after a party,” said another, “but this can leave only the happiest memories.”

“I want my children’s idea of a party to be something higher than an occasion for eating a great many good things,” replied Mrs. Brown. “Well, you have certainly succeeded,” was the unanimous answer.

So without hurry, weariness or undue excitement the blessed Christmas season was lived through once more. A spirit of calm, serene happiness pervaded each day, making it a time of real soul-growth, such a time we trust as He whose birthday it is would have approved. Such a time as can be looked back upon in later years with real joy and gratitude, Mr. and Mrs.

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Brown and Mrs. Gray finding time to read together some of the beautiful thoughts on Christmas given us by our great writers, as well as for much quiet talk.

“ I never like to let Christmas go by without re-reading Dickens’ Christmas stories and imbibing anew their teaching. How he did love Christmas! ” said Mrs. Brown.

After spending a few weeks in the Brown family Mrs. Gray was very loath to return with the children to their old home, and a house being vacant on the next street she was easily persuaded to rent it and move her belongings there.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were very pleased at the prospect of having the children of whom they had grown so fond still near at hand, and as for the children — well, when Mrs. Brown told them that they were

going to live just around the corner from her and Uncle, Jamie looked at her for a moment as if he could hardly believe such good news, then rushed at her and almost strangled her with hugs as he exclaimed, "Oh! I'm so glad; I didn't want to leave you at all."

This arrangement suited all concerned, for as another little one would arrive at the Browns' home ere long Mrs. Brown was glad to have a little more leisure, and also glad that the children to whom she had been foster-mother would still be within easy reach and she might continue to watch over and assist in their development.

Finding that several of her mother-friends also expected soon to renew their motherhood, she suggested to them that they should meet at one another's homes

once a week and read together some of the many splendid books which were being written on the subject. This they gladly agreed to do.

The first book they took up was Mrs. Proudfoot's "A Mother's Ideals," of which a copy had been sent to one of them. Their plan at first was for one to read a paragraph or two, then for all to discuss it, but so interested did they soon become that each wished to possess the book, and after that they all read certain portions at home for discussion at the club. In this way they gained much more than if each had read the book alone.

They had been meeting thus for several weeks when one of them told of a young friend, a very bright, earnest girl, who expected to be married in the course of a few months, and who hearing of these little

gatherings for child-study begged to be allowed to study with them.

They were glad indeed to open their doors to her, for they each felt how much more they might have made of their family life had they studied these subjects before marriage.

They realized that "the call has come to-day as never before for mothers to work and study together."

“The real object of Froebel in the Mother-Play was to arouse the mother to a consciousness that she had in her hands the power to mould the ideal citizen, and through him to bring about the ideal social state. What crowned heads and legislators failed to do she might do, and when the grand co-operation of mother with mother might be established, in God’s good time, they would mould for us the new race, the pure interdependent brotherhood, and make the way ready for the ‘Christ that is to be.’” — ANDREA HOFER PROUDFOOT.

CHAPTER VI

A BOWL OF BREAD AND MILK

“ All gone! the supper’s gone!
White bread and milk so sweet,
For baby dear to eat.

 All gone! the supper’s gone!
Where did baby’s supper go?
Tongue, you had a share I know.
Little mouth, with open lips,
Through your rosy gate it slips.
Little throat, you know full well
Where it went if you would tell.

 Little hands, grow strong;
 Little legs, grow long;
 Little cheeks, grow red;
 You have all been fed.”

— EMILY HUNTINGDON MILLER.

So sang Mrs. Brown as she sat with Robert, who had just finished his supper



of bread and milk, on her knee; and as she sang, Robert with wide-open eyes solemnly showed each part of his body as it was mentioned, then jumped down and ran

around the room and back for the kiss which always ended this little game.

Being a strong, healthy child, and living so much out of doors and so actively, he was always ready for his meals, and when quite young would clap his hands at the sight of the familiar blue bowl out of which he was usually fed.

Mrs. Brown always fed him slowly, as she wished him to form this habit from the very beginning, and interspersed the mouthfuls with laughter and cheery words.

He so enjoyed his food that the sight of the empty bowl brought a look of disappointment and wonderment to his face as Mrs. Brown said, "No more this time, little man; it's all gone."

How thankful she was that her study of child-nature had taught her how to interpret the look on her child's face, this

shadow so tiny now, but which if not dispersed might grow into a heavy cloud which would darken his whole life!

She knew that this look of wonderment meant that the young soul was beginning to grapple with the great thought of the constant change everywhere about us, and that it was most important that he should be led, little by little, to solve aright this problem so perplexing to many minds.

A few minutes ago the bowl was full, now it was empty,—where had it gone? Who had taken it? Would it come back again? This was the unconscious questioning of the young soul.

To all appearance there was loss, destruction, and he was the destroyer; he had caused something which was not to be, but he had come into the world, not to destroy but to build, and he must be helped

to understand the part he was playing, to see that he had not really destroyed anything but only made it over into something else and something better. So Mrs. Brown would pinch the rosy cheek and say, "Here it is. Here is the bread and milk in these rosy cheeks," and putting him on the floor would say, "Now creep away, little man, the bread and milk has made you strong and active," till, little by little, he grasped the connection between the food he had eaten and his bodily health and strength, and so had his first lesson in temperance, namely, that, "We eat to live, not live to eat," so that when by and by he was refused more cake or candy with the words, "Only a little candy, now and then, for candy doesn't make as strong bodies as bread or potatoes," he was ready to acquiesce and deny himself the luxury,

thus taking the first step in mastering the body.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were greatly helped by Mr. Snider's Commentary on the "All-Gone" song, especially enjoying the following thoughts.

"The child will not only eat, but when he has eaten he will know the meaning of eating; his appetite may be satisfied with his meal, but his soul is unsatisfied just with his body's satiety, till he finds out what this whole business of eating means. He soon perceives that when he has swallowed his porridge he has made something into nothing, but in this diabolic condition of destroyer he cannot rest. His act must be connected with its total process ere he can have peace, which comes when he sees the positive outcome. Thus the child gets a hint of the move-

ment which overcomes the vanishing and is more deeply satisfied by his knowledge than by his porridge, though he must have the porridge too, and have it first. . . . So Froebel will have the child begin, quite before he can talk, to have a presentiment of the whole, especially in matters immediately connected with him and coming under his observation. The child must have his little grapple with the vanishing at the very start of independent existence when he begins to take nourishment free of his mother's breast. He sees that which he eats disappearing: what does it mean? As before said he feels himself a destroyer and the destroyer pure and simple is the Devil; no wonder that the child feels uncomfortable; he wants to get out of such company, and the mother if she is wise will at once give him her

help. Alack-a-day! she may not be wise, she may not know what to do, and so leave the little fellow to struggle with the fiends all by himself. Still the child cannot do without this negative element of life; he has to pass through it in one form or another; the great point is, that he be not allowed to stick fast in it during the passage."

It always made Mrs. Brown feel very serious to read such things and think how without the help of such teachers she would have been totally unfit to guide her children safely through these dark mazes. She felt how little her college course had fitted her to be a true interpreter of life to the young souls who should look to her for guidance and direction during their early life, and she determined to work and pray for the coming of the time when an

earnest study of child nature, its needs and grand possibilities, should be a regular part of the school course for both boys and girls, the future parents of the race; when the profession of parenthood should require at least as careful preparation as that of law or medicine.

The thought of the thousands of young men and women who every year entered into marriage without the slightest preparation for parenthood, and the consequent dwarfed and twisted lives all about us, saddened her heart and stirred her to action, for she felt that woman must solve this problem, and by educating public opinion, woman alone could bring about a better state of affairs.

“ If to make a dress properly, to keep a set of books, or teach a school demands thought and study, surely to guide a young

soul requires much more. If I desire to be a trained nurse, a stenographer, a dress-maker or milliner, I must go through a course of training, of apprenticeship, society demands it; how is it that this same society allows, nay almost forces me, to enter into motherhood without one hour's training for its duties," she would exclaim. "It is only by chance the books and help I needed fell in my way before I became a mother; the majority of mothers do not even know there are such books."

So while striving to feed little Robert's body and even more carefully his mind and soul, she stood with hands outstretched to other mothers that she might, if possible, help them to find the light she had found and which had so enriched her life.

Thus was this little soul led step by step to unravel the web of life, led to find everywhere the Positive overcoming the Negative and taught that while on the surface there was constant motion, constant change, it was only the outer form, the effect, which changed; underneath was the unchangeable Cause.

“ Know of a truth,” says Carlyle, “ that only the Time Shadows have perished or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was and whatever is and whatever will be is even now and for ever . . . symbols, forms, must decay and vanish, while Truth weaves for herself new, higher forms of expression.”

When tears sprang to baby's eyes at the departure of father or playmate, mother would dry them by talking of and making plans for the return.

His look of disappointment when the candles went out one by one on the Christmas Tree he had so enjoyed was dispersed by the promise of seeing them again next year.

When the children watched the leaves fall from the trees in the fall Mrs. Brown helped them by means of stories, games and songs, to know winter as Nature's sleeping time and led their thoughts forward to the joyous new birth of spring.

She stirred their imaginations by helping them to play that they were caterpillars crawling about on the ground, then, after a time of rest, waking up, no longer caterpillars but glorious, free butterflies.

The little game of the birds flying South for the winter always ended with their flying back in the spring.

The ennui, or "all gone" feeling that sometimes creeps into a family when Christmas or birthday, around which their thoughts have been for some time closely centred, has gone by, she prevented by having some fresh interest, or new line of work, to suggest.

By many such experiences did Mr. and Mrs. Brown prepare the children to understand death when by and by it should come into their experience; to feel, as Phillips Brooks so beautifully puts it, that "Death is merely one of the events in life, not the end of life," and to believe with Froebel "that we most shall live when men shall call us dead."

Alas, how many children are allowed to look upon death as a dark, horrible abyss!

"Continuity of existence, without break

or interruption, is the fundamental idea that needs inculcation, not only among children but among ignorant people generally," says Sir Oliver Lodge.

The Picture illustrating the All-Gone song draws our attention to the fact that not only must we help the child to realize that the food he eats returns to him but that his deed returns also, that our characters are made by the thoughts we think, the deeds we do.

Lulu was particularly fond of this picture and would often sit quietly looking at it for some minutes, and asked Auntie over and over to tell her about it. She named the little girl Mary, and Mrs. Brown overheard her one day soliloquizing as she looked at the picture, "I'm sorry you lost your bird, Mary, but if you are good, I think your mother will get you another

and then you'll be more careful, won't you, and not leave the door open."

In order that the children might realize that the deed does indeed return upon the doer, that as a man sows so must he reap, Mr. and Mrs. Brown strove to make any punishment they found necessary the natural outcome of the deed done; when Robert was too rough with pussy he was deprived of her company; if he cried or fretted he was quietly taken from the room and his parents' society. Noisy or troublesome behaviour at the table resulted in the chair of the small offender being moved back until he was ready to behave nicely. When Jamie carelessly left his knife lying about until it was lost he had to get on as best he could with a blunt kitchen knife until he learned to take care of a better one. Naughtiness

on the street invariably resulted in one's being left at home next time.

Quiet action took the place of scolding, or fault finding, and was much more effective in immediate results as well as in habit-forming.

When Robert was old enough to enjoy a drink of milk his mother felt he should begin to find out to whom he was indebted for it, so she took him again and again to see the cows.

Sometimes he saw them being milked and had a taste of the fresh warm milk, again he saw them eating the grass or quietly chewing the cud in the grassy field, and still again eating hay in the barn. Then they went to see the hay mown and stored in the barn.

On these visits, when they were often accompanied by the Gray children, they

carried some apple or other dainty to feed the cows, and Robert was soon brave



enough to pat their backs and stroke their faces while Mother said, "Thank you,

good cow, for the nice milk you give us," or, "Eat away, good cows, and fill your bags full of milk; we shall want some for supper."

After that they never passed a cow without stopping to say, "Thank you," and Robert, of his own accord, for a long time never took a drink of milk without first thanking the cows for it.

Mrs. Brown tacked some good pictures of cows low on the nursery wall, and even before he could walk Robert would creep to them and, raising himself by a chair, pat and kiss them, saying as he did so, "Moo, Moo."

The picture and song of Grass Mowing in the Mother-Play was an endless source of interest to the children as they pointed out Peter mowing the grass, the wagon carrying it to the barn, Lena milking the

cow and making butter and the mother giving a cup of milk to the baby; or swung their arms in imitation of mowing.

May loved to move about on all fours, crying "Moo-moo," and eating imaginary grass, while she and Lulu both thought it great fun to represent milking, using the fingers of one hand for the teats which they milked with the other, then carrying the imaginary cup of milk to Robert to drink.

When through their own experiences in digging little flower-beds, planting seeds and helping plants to grow, they had learned something of the part sunshine and rain play in plant life, they learned many little hymns which helped them to feel their heavenly Father's love working in and through and by these things, and

were able to sing with understanding and joy before each meal,

“ For the fruit upon the tree,
For the birds that sing of thee,
For the earth in beauty drest,
Father, Mother and the rest,
For thy precious, loving care,
For thy bounty everywhere,
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee,”

for they were beginning to realize something of the interdependence of all men as well as of man's dependence on Nature and Nature's God.

“ If in childhood we give the ideal of interdependence the man will grow up to see his responsibilities,” says Mrs. Proudfoot.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown intended to bring up their children so that as men or women

they would feel that, "He who lives without doing his share is the only beggar, though he call himself rich."

In order to realize this aim they seized every opportunity to illustrate to them the solidarity of the race. When they were rejoicing in new dresses, or coats, they raised their joy from a merely sensual one to the spiritual plane by leading them through work and play, song and story which traced the process by means of which these things came to them, leading them thus to see that they were indebted not only to Father and Mother, but to many unknown workmen in shop and factory, to the sheep on the hillside, and to Him whose love is manifested in all these ways.

They were also helped to trace the process by means of which they had their

cake and bread. Baking day was always eagerly looked forward to, for each had a lump of dough to roll with his tiny rolling pin and bake in his little pans.

They were taken too to see the wheat growing in the fields and to a flour mill, while it was a never forgotten experience to crush a few grains of wheat between a cube and a sphere and thus make some "really" flour. Water-wheels were quite the fashion at this time and were constructed in many ways, sometimes of blocks or sticks, sometimes of chairs, but best of all, when they had a number of playmates, of the children themselves, four children standing in the centre with crossed hands forming the wheel, while the rest joined hands and made the stream which turned it. And as their little voices rang out,

“I’m small I know,
But wherever I go
The fields grow greener still,”

Auntie’s heart rejoiced as she remembered Froebel’s words, “The plays of childhood become the realities of later life,” and the prayer arose in her heart that of each of them it might indeed be true that wherever they went, “the field grew greener still.”

But well she knew that nothing in this world comes by chance, but that, on the contrary, all is cause and effect, so that if we desire a certain effect in manhood or womanhood we must set at work in childhood the causes which will in course of time produce that effect.

Neglect childhood, treat the first mental and spiritual outgoings as of little or no account, and it will be useless to look in

manhood for the full, ripe fruit. Childhood is the seeding time, maturity the harvest and

“Whatsoe’er the sowing be,
Reaping, we its fruit shall see.”

That the children might from the first know themselves one with all others, that the feeling of one-ness with all, of brotherhood, which lies in germ in every little soul, might not be crushed, but fed and nourished by daily experiences until it grew into a grand, glorious reality, making of all creation one united, loving family with one Father working in, and through, and by each, was her conscious aim.

She felt that by nourishing this feeling of unity by her daily life and conversation with the children as well as by the games,

songs, stories and pictures with which she surrounded them, she was giving the first lessons in true religion. They were not ready for abstract teaching, but must have great truths presented in symbols; they must be led in their own childish way “to live the life if they would know of the doctrine.”

She felt the truth of the words of Phillips Brooks, “While men believe in the possibilities of children being religious, they are largely failing to make them so, because they are offering them not a child’s but a man’s religion — man’s forms of faith and man’s forms of experience.”

She loved to ponder Froebel’s words: “This feeling of community first uniting the child with mother, father, brothers and sisters, and resting on a higher, spiritual

unity, to which later on is added the unmistakable discovery that father, mother, brothers, sisters, human beings in general, feel and know themselves to be in community and unity — with humanity, with God — this feeling of community is the very first germ, the very first beginning of all true religious spirit, of all genuine yearning in unhindered unification with the eternal, with God. Genuine and true, living religion, reliable in danger and struggles, in time of oppression and need, in joy and pleasure, must come to man in his infancy; for the Divine spirit that lives and is manifested in the finite, in man, has an early though dim feeling of its divine origin; and this vague sentiment, this exceedingly misty feeling should be fostered, strengthened, nurtured, and later on raised into full consciousness,

into clear apprehension. It is, therefore, not only a touching sight for the quiet and unseen observer, but productive of eternal blessings for the child, when the mother lays the sleeping infant upon his couch with an intensely loving, soulful look to their heavenly Father, praying Him for fatherly protection and loving care.

“Therefore the true mother is loath to let another put the sleeping child to bed, or take from it the awakened child.”

Along the same lines writes Miss Blow: “The one great difficulty in the way of carrying out Froebel’s ideal of religious development is our own lack of vital piety. It is easy to teach catechisms, it is not easy to awaken and foster faith, hope and love. Any mother may force her child to memorize men’s definitions of God, but

only one who has herself a filial spirit can teach him to know his heavenly Father. She whose own soul is dead may be a religious drill sergeant, but only the living spirit can communicate spiritual life.”

Oh, how the world needs and hungers for vital religion, reliable in danger and struggles, in times of oppression and need, in joy and pleasure! What a poor, dead, unsatisfying thing is the religion of thousands who call themselves Christians! How little of real joy and inspiration they find in it! Is it not with too many an empty observance of forms and ceremonies having little or no vital connection with their daily life and aspiration? How meaningless to many are the words “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you,” exclaimed Mrs. Brown after reading these words to her husband.

With the thought of developing the feeling of oneness with all as the first step in true religion, Mrs. Brown would stop as they passed a blacksmith's shop, that Robert might enjoy seeing the sparks fly from the red-hot iron, and say, "Good, kind blacksmiths to help make Robert's carriage," and when he grew older told him fascinating tales of the miners at work in the deep, dark mine. When they passed carpenters at work on a building, she would say, as they watched them, "Kind carpenters to make nice houses for little Roberts and Mays to live in," and encourage him to imitate hammering and sawing.

Sometimes they would play that Father was a tall tree and they were woodmen cutting it down to make firewood or supply the carpenter with boards; then how Robert would clap his hands and shout

as, after much vigorous chopping, the tree began to sway back and forth and presently fell to the ground.

Through such imaginary play they not only helped him to connect all things about him with one another but peopled the great unknown world with friends and helpers, not as is so often thoughtlessly done, with dangers, enemies and fear.

When the children grew older a favourite subject of conversation at meal time was to trace the different articles of food through the process of their production or manufacture. By this means much valuable information was gathered, but better still, the habit of logical thinking, of tracing effects back to their causes, was engendered, and feelings of love and good-will to men awakened.

“Nothing,” says Froebel, “is more dangerous to the health of the intellect, nothing is more prejudicial to the culture of the heart, than the habit of looking at particular objects and events in detachment from the great whole of life.”

“May not the child receive even in babyhood a prejudice in favour of the universal life, and from the beginning of his conscious career live in the clear sunlight and fresh air of the generic ideal, instead of being shut up in the prison walls of his own atomic individuality?” asks Miss Blow.

Mrs. Brown found, too, that these efforts to help her children feel that all men are brothers, the children of one Father working together, consciously or unconsciously, for the good of the race, aroused and strengthened her own feeling

of fellowship and gave her a more real, genuine love towards all.

In many ways both she and her husband felt their own lives broadening and deepening; theories which had been hardly more than theories became actualities as they strove to make their lives fit copies for their little son. God in giving them a little child to train was training them.

They proved the truth of the teaching that it is only by becoming as little children that we can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. By truly living with their children, that is, learning to see as they see, hear as they hear and feel as they feel, they were led back to the paths of simplicity and truth where alone peace is to be found. How often parents lose this great blessing because they fail to

reverently study God's thought as expressed in their child!

How truly Froebel says: "As we help your young souls to expand, our own, in the sweet task, shall grow toward heaven."

*“ Dear little children, we will learn from you,
Gardens we’ll make, and you the flowers shall be,
Our care shall seem no tedious drudgery —
Only a happy trust that’s ever new.*

*“ We’ll guard you from the great world’s strife and
din;
But, ah, our chiefest, gladdest care shall be
To give you your own selves! to help you see
The meaning of each opening power within.*

*“ Oh, blessed thought, that God to us has given
The finishing of that which he has planned;
And as we help your young souls to expand,
Our own, in the sweet task, shall grow toward
heaven.”*

— FROEBEL.

CHAPTER VII

THE MIRROR OF NATURE

Mr. and Mrs. Brown never lost sight of the truth that the ultimate aim of education was that the individual might find himself, was self-knowledge, and that this process began in the cradle and continued all through life. They knew also that self-knowledge grew by the two-fold means of reflection and introspection.

The mirrors in which man sees himself reflected and so comes to self-consciousness are his own actions, the actions of others, and Nature.

They therefore sought to supply their children with opportunities for many

sided activity, they planned much companionship with children at their own stage of development and had them live much with Nature.

In order that they might enjoy the society of children of different characters and dispositions, which is so important for their true unfolding, and might have it under wise and loving supervision, Mrs. Brown never rested until she had aroused sufficient interest in their neighbourhood to have a good Kindergarten established.

Looking into the Browns' yard during the spring and summer one might often find the children with small, gaily painted watering-cans, rakes, spades and wheelbarrows busy gardening, for each child had from babyhood his own little garden in which he was encouraged, year after year, to grow both flowers and vegetables,

their parents feeling with Prof. Hodge, "To allow a child to grow up without planting a seed or rearing a plant is a crime against civilized society. . . . The



child that puts forth creative effort to make the world better, the child that plants a seed or cares for the life of an animal, is working hand in hand with Nature and the Creator, and what higher religious development can we desire than

that he become the reflected image of God! . . . In a child that has never reared anything of its own there is little or no foundation upon which to build regard for the rights of others in these respects.”

So in this sunny garden summer after summer was enacted Froebel's picture in the Mother-Play:

“ In the sunlit garden,
Through the glad spring day,
Watch the happy little folks
Turning work to play.

“ Guarding, watering, tending,
With such pretty zeal,
Doing from their little hearts
As if the flowers could feel.

“ Such work does not tire them,
For they love it so;
And are thanked in measure full,
If the flowers grow.”

And how serious and reverent were the little faces as they looked at the tiny seeds in each of which Mother had told them a little fairy lay asleep that would, if they prepared a nice bed for it and put it carefully in, soon wake up!

How they watched day after day to see once again this miracle of Nature, and what joy filled their little hearts when the tiny plant appeared above ground and grew taller and taller till finally buds and flowers appeared to reward their toil and patience!

Were there ever such daisies and pansies as grew in those gardens and were plucked to adorn the breakfast table or carried as a birthday gift to some dear friend?

Then what joy to eat radishes and lettuce which one had himself grown!

When a rainy day came and interfered with their plans for out-door pleasure how quickly the sunshine came back to their faces at Father's suggestion of the joy the rain would be to the grass and flowers!

How much easier to be patient and happy on a broiling July day when one realized that the heat was helping to mature the fruit!

How hard it was at first to refrain from digging up the seeds, or drowning them with water from the new watering cans, and what self-control and faith was developed as they mastered their impulse, because "it would not be kind to the little seeds!"

It was a gay little party that responded to mother's song:

“Come, children, with me
To the garden away,
The flowers are all waiting
Our coming to-day.
In heart and in sunshine
Is drooping each leaf,
But the children are coming
To bring them relief.”

And the feeling of responsibility grew apace as they began to realize through their own experience that even little children had power to help and save weaker things!

Then in the yard behind the house was the home of the chickens, the rabbits and the pigeons.

“Why do you bother with hens when eggs and chickens are both so plentiful in the market?” a neighbour would sometimes ask. “For the children’s sake,” was the answer.

The tiny ones of the family seemed never tired of watching and feeding the mother hens and their babies, and often made remarks which showed their mother how much they were learning from them. "When the mother calls, the chickens run so quick and so do I," was one remark. "Pussy got into the chicken yard and the little chicks all ran so fast to their mother and she chased Pussy away," was another.

The mother hen sitting so patiently week after week on her eggs was a good object lesson for old and young.

The weakness and helplessness of the baby rabbits, pigeons, kittens and puppies, and the patient, self-sacrificing care of the mothers appealed strongly to the children and helped them to realize something of the meaning of motherhood and

childhood, while pictures, stories and games helped to deepen the impression.

Crumbs were always saved from meals and scattered for the wild birds, and great was the joy of the children when one was discovered building her nest in one of their trees. Mrs. Brown had watched anxiously for an opportunity to show them a family of tiny birds in their nest, for she felt this was an experience she would not willingly have them lose.

“ In the pretty picture
 Of the nested birds
 Baby reads *his* ‘ love-song,’
 Written without words —
 Hears the nestlings calling,
 And his heart calls, too ;
 As they need their mother,
 So his heart needs you ”

says Froebel.

It was a pretty sight to see the little heads bent over the picture of the Birds' Nest in the Mother Play Book while Mother told the story and showed them how to make a nest with their hands, using the thumbs for the bobbing heads of the baby birds as they cried, "Peep, peep. Mother dear, peep. You are much loved. Peep, peep."

"The feeling that all life is *one* life slumbers in the child's soul. Only very gradually, however, can this slumbering feeling be transfigured into a wakening consciousness. Slowly, through a sympathetic study of Nature and of human life, through a growing sense of the soul and meaning of all natural facts and of all human relationships, and through recreating in various forms that external world which is but the objective expres-

sion of his own inmost being, the individual attains to a consciousness of the connectedness and unity of life, and to a vision of the Eternal Fountain of Life. Through the play of the Birds' Nest, Mother, you take a few short steps upon one of the paths which lead towards this goal; viz., the path which, starting from sympathy with Nature, runs through study of Nature to comprehension of the forces, laws, and inner meaning of Nature. You are incited to enter upon this path by your feeling that a prophetic sense of the inner connection of Nature stirs and dreams in your child's heart. You also feel that there is no single object in Nature which has more power to lift his dreaming presentiment into waking consciousness than a bird's nest," writes Froebel.

His teaching is that man, "a single vital spark of the Divine flame," "seeks and must ever seek Unity, the Being that is One in and for itself — God," and that in the objective world he sees the Life with which he is one reflected, and through this reflection comes gradually to realize that union with all things which alone brings peace, therefore he tells us: "The yearning to inhale the life of Nature awakens early in the human soul. The young child loves to take it in with long deep breaths. Hence he longs to be out of doors and especially to watch the quick, free movements of birds and animals. Mother, cherish this longing, and whenever possible, give your child that intimacy with Nature which he craves; but do not imagine that his craving can be stilled by any merely external

experience. His soul seeks the soul of things.”

It was Mrs. Brown’s deepest longing to be to her children the interpreter of life which it is the mother’s high privilege to be. Together she and her children lived with and lovingly studied Nature, in her many forms. Like the little Hiawatha they —

“ Learned of every bird its language,
 Learned their names and all their secrets,
 How they built their nest in summer,
 Where they hid themselves in winter,
 Talked with them whene’er he met them,
 Called them ‘ Hiawatha’s chickens.’ ”

Together they watched and sympathized with every phase of Nature, supplementing their own observations with the best books, pictures and poems they could procure, although in order to do so they were obliged to wear plainer

clothing and deny themselves some luxuries.

The smallest and apparently meanest of Life's children was in their family treated with respect because it was the dear Father's handiwork, and so a deep feeling of reverence was inculcated in each little heart. Nature was a great picture book spread before the children's eyes, and little ears were ever alert to hear the faintest whisper from Mother Nature. The things of Nature were their constant toys and playmates.

Little by little through the long summer days were the mysteries of plant and insect life unfolded to them. With never-waning interest they watched the bees carrying the "gold dust" from plant to plant and receiving the drop of sweet juice in payment, or traced with gentle

fingers the lines and markings which pointed out to them the way to the flowers' "pantry."

Then what fun on a rainy day to play that they themselves were bees gathering honey from the coloured balls which were for the time being roses or lilies, and storing it for winter in the imaginary hives built of blocks, or to be in their lively imaginations father and mother birds busily building nests and caring for hungry broods of young ones! What glorious birds' nests filled with eggs were made with the clay! What hours they spent watching the wonderful little ants at their daily work, and all unconsciously absorbing lessons in industry and perseverance which would stand them in good stead later on!

How they all, even baby, gloried in the

beautiful moonlight evenings! Great waves of pity rolled over Mrs. Brown's heart for the mothers who allowed themselves to be "too busy" in social, or other supposed duties, to enjoy these things with their children — mothers in name but in heart knowing nothing of the joys of true motherhood, all unconsciously losing the real joys of life in order to seize a few empty useless husks. "Father, open the eyes of mother that they may see the truth," was her constant prayer.

Then indoors in the early winter evenings what fun they all had trying to make shadow pictures on the wall, and how skilful some of the little fingers became till jumping rabbits and long-necked swans seemed to fill the room.

On bright, sunshiny days what jolly

times they had chasing the Light Bird as it flitted here and there as a mirror was moved in the sunlight, and how strange to find after much experimenting that no matter how hard one tried he could not catch and hold it, and what a deep light came into little eyes as they sang,

“ No hand can catch the light-bird,
The pretty bird, the bright bird,
But eyes can catch and hearts can hold,
The light-bird on the wall,”

and began to realize that there was another way to possess things besides physical possession.

How wonderful it seemed to the children that the same sun and moon which gave them light also gave light to Aunt, Uncle and little cousins in far-away Japan, and shone upon the vessel in

which Grandpapa was now returning from England!

They loved to peep out of the window



just before jumping into bed and say, "Shine on, little stars, and light all the little boys and girls in the world," then to hop under the warm covers and sing, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," or on moonlight nights, one of their dearly-loved Moon Songs.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were encouraged and helped in all this work by the beautiful mottoes of the Mother-Play Book, such as —

“ All that is noble in your child is stirred,
And every energy to action spurred
By Nature’s silent, oft-repeated word.

“ He sees the moon glide on her silver way ;
He sees the stars return with closing day ;
He sees each plant some hidden law obey.

“ No wonder that he thinks an inner spring
Of love creative lives in everything,
And bids it to his life an offering bring.

“ And as the bright unbroken chain returns
In beauty on itself, his spirit yearns
Towards that great love which dimly he dis-
cerns.”

The pictures illustrating the Mother-Play Light Songs were examined by the children over and over again and the stories connected with them told and re-told. Robert was particularly interested at one time in the little boy who is cry-

ing because he has broken a window; Froebel's closing words, "Sometimes we are like this little boy: we do something which keeps light from getting into our hearts. Then what a sad time we have in the dark and how much trouble we have to take before we can get the light again," making a deep impression on his mind. His father had first told it to him one day when he had been untruthful and was consequently not as happy as usual, and he asked for it many times afterwards, seeming to gain much help from it.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown carefully guarded the children lest their love for animals should be, as Froebel says, a door through which evil might stray into their lives.

"The interest a young child gives
To every animal that lives,

Dear mother, is an open door
Through which unbounded good may pour,
Filling his mind with knowledge manifold,
Of Nature's wondrous laws, so new, so old.

“But watch! lest by this self-same way
Into his soul some ill may stray,
And, while your eyes look other where,
Make for itself a lodgment there.
Watch and with noble thoughts so fill his mind,
That passing evil may no shelter find.”

They strove by means of the stories, songs, pictures and plays with which they interpreted the children's daily experiences to keep their little minds so centred on the beautiful and true that passing evil might indeed “no shelter find” there. Then when occasion arose they carefully explained to the children that there were things which

animals might do because they were only animals, and knew no better, which it would be very wrong for boys and girls, who knew so much more than animals, to do. Cats and dogs knew no better than to scratch and bite one another, or chase and kill weaker animals. Ponto treated all other dogs as enemies and drove them out of the yard, but boys and girls liked to share their good times with all others.

Mrs. Brown found too that she must be continually on the alert to direct the conversation quietly and pleasantly into other channels when neighbours or friends thoughtlessly related tales of accidents or crime in the children's hearing, for she felt that great care should be exercised to wisely present the negative side of life to the unfolding mind.

Froebel's words, " Only the conviction

that it is the darkness within which makes the darkness without can restore the lost peace of our souls," came home as a great awakening thought to both Mr. and Mrs. Brown as together they studied the Light Songs of the Mother Play.

They felt how greatly the world to-day needs to realize this truth, to be taught to look within, into our own characters, our state of awakenment or sleep, for the cause of whatever comes to us. The Light shines ever bright, clear, steady, to illuminate our daily path and fill us with joy and hope, but how often we turn our backs upon "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and then complain of the darkness and misery! So tightly closed are the doors and windows of many hearts, so clogged

with worldliness, selfishness or prejudice, that the blessed light finds not a chink through which to penetrate. Therefore by means of many little games, songs and stories they strove to develop the children's inherent love of light, and so to lead them, step by step, to the spiritual light of which the sun and moon are but the symbol. Good morning was always sung to the sunshine and the children frequently taken out of doors in the early evening to see the moon and stars. Indeed, at one time Robert would never go willingly to bed until he had been taken out to see if the moon were shining and to wave "Good night" to the stars.

In the same way they corrected the error into which the child is apt to fall when he judges alone by what his senses

tell him (which error is emphasized by the careless expressions of grown people) and led him to realize that the apparent rising and setting of the sun was but an appearance, that in reality the sun never left us but darkness was caused by our turning away from it; that on dull days the sun was shining just as bright, but a cloud had come between it and us shutting off some of the light; for they felt it most important that the children should be helped to correctly read the symbol that later on they might grasp the reality for which it stood, thus setting their feet firmly on the ladder set up between earth and heaven. Ignoring or misunderstanding the symbol, many fail to enter into the joy of the truth symbolized.

“Nature,” says Drummond, “is not a mere image or emblem of the spiritual.

It is a working model of the spiritual." When the truth expressed in the words, "That is not first which is spiritual but that which is natural," becomes better understood, we shall cease striving to force abstract ideas upon the young mind, and shall instead lay the chief stress upon filling their minds with symbols of truth, so laying a solid foundation for future thought; shall realize how worse than useless it is to try to awaken ideas in early life by words alone. Nature with her concrete examples will then be seen to be the truest teacher of childhood. Long before a child can gain any idea, for instance, of the truth of immortality from words, it begins to dawn in his mind through living in close communion with nature and finding in his mother a loving interpreter of her secrets. The

child who has his attention early drawn to the connection and interdependence of the seasons, who sows seed in the spring, cares for the plants all summer, and in the fall gathers the newly formed seeds ready to plant the following spring, who watches the buds formed in the fall swelling and opening in the spring, who dramatizes the life of the caterpillar and butterfly, is planting in his mind seeds from which the full-grown flower will develop in after life. Debarred from or limited in such experiences in childhood, the mind at maturity has but a vague, hazy, unreal hold upon spiritual realities.

“Let childhood ripen in childhood,” was therefore one of the foundation stones in the life with which Mr. and Mrs. Brown strove to surround their children. They realized that life in this

world, being one continuous whole beginning in the cradle and ending only in the grave, nothing was to be gained but much lost by attempting to hurry the individual out of childhood into manhood; that by depriving him of all or any of the experiences that properly belong to that stage we were interfering with his normal development and seriously handicapping his life. Step by step up the ladder must each individual climb, and education should aim to help him place his feet firmly on each rung.

Thus the days, the months and years flew quickly by in the Brown homestead, father, mother and children forming one complete, united family, helping, inspiring, reverencing one another, while ever looking within for Light, Wisdom and Strength.

“ Dear mother, when the busy day is done,
And sleeping lies each tired little one,
Then fold your own hands on a heart at rest
And sleep with them upon God’s loving breast.

“ The love that gave you such a sacred charge
Is passing tender and exceeding large!
Oh, trust it utterly, and it will pour
Into each crevice of your life its store.

“ Then things unworthy shall no more find room,
And like a sweet contagion in your home
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